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Maccabi hoopsters lose in Istanbul

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'Oklahoma!' in the Negev

Time Out



The Knesset's power couple



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US Navy to aid in Dakar search

By ARREH O'SULLIVAN

Salvage teams from the US Navy are to participate in a new search for the Dakar submarine, which went missing in the Mediterranean with its 69 crew members on its maiden voyage in 1968.

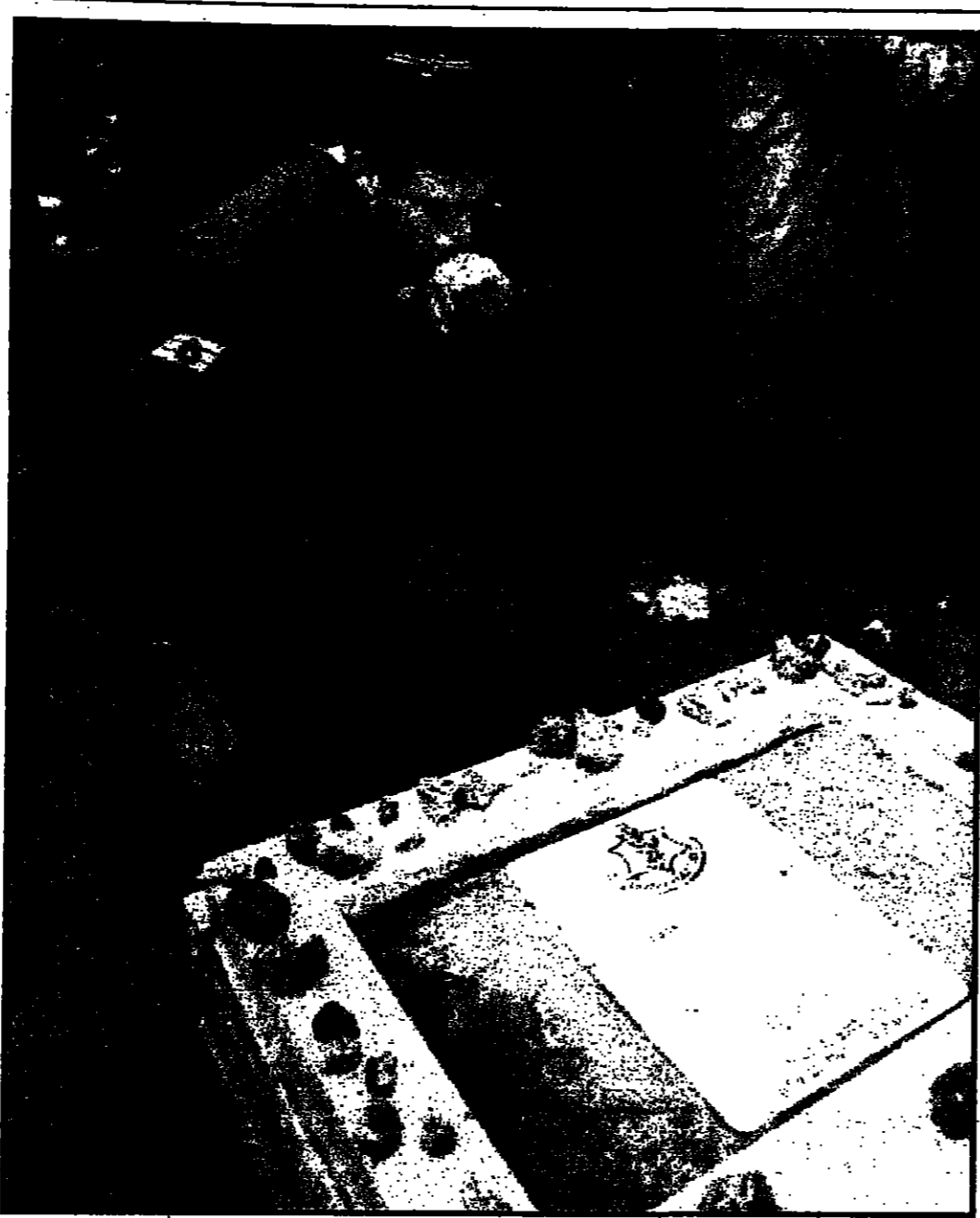
The search is expected to begin this summer. A senior US naval official is presently in Israel to coordinate the effort, US officials said.

The IDF confirmed that a new search is to be launched starting this summer and that the navy would be aided by "foreign civilian and military bodies." The navy refused to divulge any further information.

Since the submarine sank, the navy has spent millions of shekels on periodic searches for it. These have ranged from the Egyptian coast to the islands of Rhodes and Crete in the Aegean Sea. Recent searches centered around sonar-generated photos of what some believe to be the Dakar, submerged off the Egyptian coast.

It is believed that the Dakar dived deeper than it should have due to human error or a technical malfunction, thus causing its frame to buckle under the weight of the sea. The Dakar was last heard from on January 25, 1968, after signaling it had passed Gibraltar on its way to Haifa from the shipyards in England.

A year after the disappearance, the Dakar's emergency buoy washed up on a beach in the Gaza Strip. An analysis of corrosion on the buoy led the navy to believe that the Dakar was lost along the Egyptian coast. But since Israel was in a state of war with Egypt at the time, a search was impossible.



Shloshim

Thirty days after 73 soldiers were killed in the helicopter collision over She'ar Yashuv, a friend kneels at the graveside of one of the victims, Shiloh Levy. The tombstone remains blank because of a dispute between the family and the Defense Ministry. (See story, Page 7.) Also yesterday, seven light planes flew in formation from Mahanayim to She'ar Yashuv, towing a banner reading, "We'll remember and we'll go on." (Assaf Shilo/Israel Sun)

Cabinet debates up to 10% pullback

By DAVID MAKOVSKY and JON IMMANUEL

As last night's marathon cabinet session extended past midnight, there was widespread expectation that it would end with nine ministers supporting a proposal by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to pull back from 9 to 10 percent of the West Bank.

Two other proposals were raised yesterday, calling for handing over 5% and 7% of the area.

The meeting, which began around 8 p.m., was held up at least once for Netanyahu to take a phone call from US Ambassador Martin Indyk.

US officials made clear to Netanyahu during his White House

By agreeing to a pullback which is substantially above the originally envisioned 2%, the Netanyahu government seems to be hoping to appease the Palestinians, after announcing plans to build a new neighborhood on Har Homa.

The speculation last night was that the pullbacks would involve the

Yasser Arafat in January, Israel is to begin the first of three pullbacks from areas in the West Bank today, with the last one due in the middle of next year. According to the Oslo 2 agreement, the first pullback was to have occurred in September.

It seems that the main issue facing the cabinet last night was whether the pullback needed to include a slice of Area C, the territories controlled exclusively by Israel.

There was speculation as to whether it would be sufficient to yield parts of Area B, the territories where Israel maintains security control, and which are viewed by officials as ultimately destined to become Area A, under exclusive Palestinian control. As it stands now, Area A constitutes about 3% of the West Bank, and Area B approximately a quarter, with the remainder being Area C.

One US official said yesterday that the US was more focused on the total territory yielded, rather than whether it came from Area B or Area C.

Pullback Phase I

Halhoul area outside of Hebron, as well as some territory surrounding Jenin and Nablus. The government is not expected to yield territory that would link Palestinian cities.

At one point during the session, the Shas ministers, who were expected to support Netanyahu's proposal, left the cabinet room to obtain Rabbi Ovadia Yosef's blessing.

According to the Hebron agreement reached by Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority Chairman

Continued on Page 14

Netanyahu's balancing act, Page 2

visit last month that they would view a 10% pullback as "credible" and not merely token.

4 MKs threaten to bolt coalition

By MICHAL YUDELMAN and MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

National Religious Party MKs Hanan Porat and Zvi Hendel, Tsomet MK Moshe Peled and Likud MK Michael Kleiner threatened to quit the coalition last night unless the pullback from Area C is not more than 30 thousand dunams, about half a percent of the area of the West Bank.

The threat is not considered immediately significant, since Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is assured of a Labor "safety net" in a Knesset vote on the pullback.

NRP ministers Zevulun Hammer and Yitzhak Levy said they might support the cabinet in the vote on the first pullback, if Netanyahu agrees to reduce the section of Area C earmarked for redeployment from two percent of the West Bank to half a percent.

After an intensive debate of several hours, the NRP's Knesset faction authorized its ministers to try to convince Netanyahu to reduce the redeployment in Area C before the cabi-

net meeting, and to get a promise from him that settlements near the planned redeployment areas - such as Efrat, Ganim and Kadim - will not be harmed.

Barring these terms, the NRP ministers would vote against the pullback.

The NRP faction also demanded reciprocal actions by the Palestinians as a condition for the first pullback.

Netanyahu was scathingly criticized at the Likud's executive meeting in Tel Aviv yesterday, during which opposition to redeployment in the Likud mounted, spearheaded by MK Ze'ev Begin, executive chairman MK Uzi Landau and former

prime minister Yitzhak Shamir.

"Without the settlements, the Likud would not have won the elections," Shamir said. "Any day that goes by without expanding the settlements in Judea and Samaria, is a defeat for the Likud. It's an indictment which those responsible will not get away with."

Landau said Netanyahu had promised him that after the Hebron redeployment there would only be one pullback, and it would constitute no more than 2% of Area C. He said he was still hoping the prime minister would keep his word.

Continued on Page 14

US Reform temple links with Marranos

By TOM GROSS

In what some are hailing as a historic watershed in Jewish history, a mainstream synagogue is to pair itself with a "Crypto Jewish" community.

Crypto Jews - or Marranos - are descendants of those Iberian Jews who were forced to convert to Christianity in medieval times, and while maintaining an outward Christian identity, have secretly kept alive Jewish traditions.

"We are going to link the vast country of Brazil with the tiny community of Sharon in Pennsylvania," says Reform Rabbi Jacques Cukierkorn, spiritual leader of the Temple Beth Israel in Sharon. Temple Beth Israel is to twin itself with the Sinagoga Brasileira Kulanu, Israel in Brazil, in what is believed will be the first project of its kind.

The Sinagoga Brasileira Kulanu

was founded by journalist Helio Daniel Cordeiro, himself a Marrano. There are about 400 Jews in Sharon, whose total population is about 120,000. About 85% of the Jews there are affiliated with Temple Beth Israel.

Cukierkorn, 29, who was born in Sao Paulo and ordained at the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, Ohio says he plans synchronized celebration of religious ceremonies. "I would also like to pair a Bar/Bat mitzvah in Sharon with one in Brazil," he says.

At present, Sharon's "sister synagogue" in Brazil numbers about 30 people.

"There are now about 10 Marrano groups in Brazil that meet to pray, celebrate holidays and teach their children. Some are in contact with similar groups in Peru and Mexico.

"My research shows there are up to 15 million people in Brazil of Iberian Jewish origin, and a further 20 million elsewhere, although of course only a small percentage of them are aware of their origins and even less would consider returning to Judaism."

PA calls for march on Har Homa

By ELLI WOHLGELERNTER and JON IMMANUEL

The Palestinian Authority has ordered a mass march on Har Homa, starting at 10 this morning from Beit Sahur.

The Voice of Palestine Radio yesterday exhorted Palestinians everywhere to "march to the peak of the mountain" to frustrate Israeli attempts to build there.

There also have been calls for Israeli Arabs to gather on the Temple Mount at noon today to pray in protest over Har Homa.

Jerusalem police will be out in force today to prevent any disturbances. Beginning at 6 a.m., some 2,500 additional policemen will be stationed at the two locations, and the extra officers will be on duty through Sunday.

The extra security will include helicopters, more roadblocks and searches, and extra patrols.

Security sources said that despite the PA's call for a protest, there has been coordination with Palestinian Police, and a separation zone will prevent marchers from storming

Israeli positions.

"We're prepared to face any disturbances in the streets over the weekend," said Cmdr. Yair Yitzhaki, the new Jerusalem police chief. "We are prepared for a whole range of reactions, including the less desirable [ones]. Since the top political echelon has made the decision [on Har Homa], they will receive the full backing of the police. The Jerusalem police are prepared for all eventualities."

"We will wait like every Friday," Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani said.

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Ben-Elissar presses Ross on UN vote

By HILLEL KUTTLER

WASHINGTON - Israeli Ambassador to the United States, Elyahu Ben-Elissar, told US special Middle East coordinator Dennis Ross yesterday that Washington should quash an upcoming UN Security Council resolution on the Har Homa construction.

"I asked him to look beyond. We are watching intently the US position on anything dealing with the Security Council resolution and the activity going on [at the UN] against us," Ben-Elissar told Israeli reporters.

Ben-Elissar said he had not issued a threat but that should the resolution pass calling on Israel to refrain from building at Har Homa, it would "ruin tomorrow for the benefit of a resolution today."

An Israeli embassy official said Ben-Elissar's comments mean that Israel would not be assuaged by a US abstention on the vote.

However, despite a week featuring multiple American criticisms of Israeli actions, relations are not sinking, Ben-Elissar said.

"This is not a crisis. This is not the start of a crisis. When we don't agree on an issue regarding Jerusalem - the American view is known, the Israeli view is known - it doesn't mean there is a crisis," he said.

Ben-Elissar met with Ross just hours after his return from three days of consultations in Israel. He quoted Ross as saying that State

Department spokesman Nicholas Burns had "overstepped his guidelines" on Monday in describing the just-formed American-Palestinian economic commission as akin to panels the US has established with Egypt, Russia and South Africa. But Ben-Elissar said Israel remains "disappointed" and "unsatisfied" by the raising of American-Palestinian relations and subsequent US clarifications.

On Burns' criticism on Wednesday of Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's decision to close down four PA institutions in Jerusalem, Ben-Elissar said: "We don't accept it when they come to us with claims about what we do in a sovereign part of Israel, including Jerusalem."

In an appearance before the Foreign Press Center, Burns said that the Israeli decisions on Har Homa and the PA offices leave the US "disappointed and ... frankly, puzzled" because Israel "ought to move these peace negotiations forward, not backwards."

Burns said: "After the Hebron agreement, we really had the sense that there was some renewed vigor and momentum in the peace negotiations and a sense of hope. And that has been negatively affected by some of these decisions of the last week by the Israeli government."

In another development, Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat has responded to a letter from Congress with a letter of his own stating that the PA has no offices in Jerusalem.



Jerusalem police cover a knife used in yesterday's stabbing. (Heater)

Two hurt in separate stabbing attacks

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH and ELLI WOHLGELERMITER

A 51-year-old Jewish resident of Jerusalem was stabbed yesterday morning while sitting on a park bench behind the King David Hotel. Police have not arrested any suspects, nor determined whether the motive was nationalistic or criminal.

The victim, David Orenstein, was brought to Haddash-Ein Kerem Hospital, where doctors performed a three-hour operation. His condition last night was listed as moderate.

Orenstein was approached by three teenagers at around 10:00 a.m. He offered them candy, which two of them accepted. The third then stabbed him in the neck with a pocket knife, and the three fled in the

direction of the Old City. Meanwhile, a taxi driver from Arad was lightly injured in the hand after struggling to prevent two Palestinians from stealing his car yesterday.

The driver picked up the two Palestinians mid-morning and drove them to Yatir, near Hebron. Near Yatir, one of the passengers took out a knife and tried to force the driver out of the car. The driver grabbed the knife but was overpowered by the two attackers, who drove off in the taxi towards the autonomous area. He was picked up by a Beduin, who took him to Yatir for treatment.

Police and IDF forces later arrived at the scene and found the abandoned car on the roadside near the settlement of Sussiya.

ABCs of redeployment

By DAVID MAKOVSKY

Area A - This area is under exclusive Palestinian control (although technically not sovereign control since the Palestinian Authority is not a state). The IDF does not enter Area A except as part of mandated periodic joint patrols.

Area B - These areas are under shared Israeli-Palestinian control and includes over 400 villages in the West Bank. Israel retains "overriding" security authority for these areas, meaning the IDF can enter these areas at will. The Palestinians retain civilian authority in these areas and are in charge of maintaining public order. For example, if somebody commits a robbery in a village, this would be handled by the Palestinian security forces.

Area C - Area C, which is under complete Israeli control, includes everything which is not in Areas A and B. This now constitutes about 70% of the West Bank, and includes all settlements and military installations. Since it is acknowledged that Area B is going to eventually become Area A, the fight for the rest of the West Bank is going to center on Area C. The religious ministers have said they do not want any part of Area C yielded in the first pullback. However, under the Oslo Declaration of Principles (DOP), Oslo 2, and the Hebron accord, Israel is committed to yielding the entire West Bank with the exception of settlements, any areas needed for external defense, and "specified military locations."

Following the signing of the Hebron accord, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu received a letter from then-secretary of state Warren Christopher signalling that Israel will designate what those military locations will be and that these will not be negotiated with the Palestinians.

While Yasser Arafat has privately told groups that he expects to gain 80% of the West Bank by the end of next year's third pullback, the Prime Minister's Office has suggested the actual figure would be around 50%, and would include both areas A and B.

ANALYSIS

Netanyahu's balancing act

By DAVID MAKOVSKY

Last night's expected decision by the cabinet to further redeploy in the West Bank is another unmistakable step in Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's road to Oslo, but it is clear that the road ahead will be as winding as the one he has already traveled. Netanyahu never fails to tell American and Palestinian officials that only a Likud leader can bring 90% of Israelis to accept the Oslo process. But for Netanyahu, bring-

ing the Likud along carries a price. Netanyahu's balancing act is straightforward: Keep the peace process on track and his governing coalition intact. Unlike Shimon Peres, who felt it was crucial to demonstrate to the public that Israel is moving in this direction freely and enthusiastically, Netanyahu wants to demonstrate the reverse: that while he realizes that progress must be credible to the Palestinians, he is proceeding grudgingly, like a person going to have a tooth pulled.

The events surrounding this pullback likely indicate the pattern for the next two pullbacks, scheduled to be completed by the middle of next year. Every move Netanyahu makes to satisfy the Palestinians will be

accompanied by a move to placate his own constituents; witness the not-so-coincidental timing of the Har Homa decision and the closing this week of four Palestinian offices.

Netanyahu could doubtlessly argue that if Yasser Arafat had fulfilled the Palestinian promises, such as to extradite terrorists, that were made in the Note for the Record that followed the Hebron accord, he would not have had to resort to what some observers jokingly call, "unilaterally-imposed reciprocity."

But this two-sided approach will, in the end, satisfy neither the Palestinians nor ideologues inside the Likud, as both vie with each other in spluttering how little they trust Netanyahu.

Winning cards and numbers

In yesterday's daily Chance drawing, the winning cards were the 10 of spades, the seven of hearts, the 10 of diamonds and the nine of clubs. In last night's weekly Payis Hazak drawing, the holder of ticket number 640012 won NIS 1 million, while ticket number 524761 was good for a new car. Those holding tickets numbered 165181, 762056, 339912, 636595, 182871, 343641, 172125 and 761485 all won NIS 5,000. Those holding tickets ending in 98772, 61717, 54882, 82628, 61456, 37008, 83911, 70794, 52814, 78768, 94770, 74385, 23870, 34953, 32636, 86961, 64490, 49552 and 48467 all won NIS 1,000. Tickets ending in 127, 511, 338 and 248 all won NIS 100; in 91, 51, 12 and 18, NIS 30; in 27 and 36, NIS 20 and in 8 and 3, NIS 10.

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Withdrawal symptoms

When Oslo 2 was signed in Washington around 18 months ago, it was one of the pesky details that was lost in the grand sweep of the agreement.

The main focus was on the fact that Israel was to withdraw from the seven major Arab towns in the territories it held since the 1967 war. Few paid much attention to the provisions concerning unspecified further redeployments down the road. Even as late as last May's elections, few politicians, possibly including Binyamin Netanyahu, really understood what Israel had committed itself to, beyond the high-profile withdrawal from Hebron that loomed ahead.

Now the first of the three further redeployments is at hand. Though the agreement piously states that nothing in it will prejudice the upcoming final-status talks, neither side really believes that the redeployments are reversible. In fact, as National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon insists, they should be called withdrawals.

As with other aspects of the peace process, Israel is caught between winning the expectations game by withdrawing from a greater-than-expected area, and not giving up too much. After Hebron, it was expected that Israel would hand over the minimum amount possible in the first withdrawal — perhaps two percent more of the West Bank. After all, the exact extent of the first two withdrawals is not really significant, since both are just a down payment toward the third withdrawal, scheduled for August 1998.

Despite this, Netanyahu has been confronted by serious opposition to this, the least problematic of the withdrawals. The Land of Israel Front, a new group of right-wing Knesset members, has insisted that there be no withdrawal from any of Area C, the roughly 70 percent of the territories that remain under complete Israeli control.

It is not clear whether there is any real matter of principle behind the right-wing's demand not to touch Area C. Obviously it is in Israel's interest to keep as much of Area C as possible before proceeding with the final-status talks, because this is the area that will be a key subject in those negotiations. But it is evident that even under the most expansive conception of what will remain under Israeli control, some of Area C will be transferred to the Palestinians.

That said, the Palestinians and the US will take the inclusion of even a small portion of Area C in this withdrawal as a symbolic reinforcement of Israel's commitment to continue the Oslo process.

A perhaps more significant and logical reason to oppose even this relatively small step is the position taken by Agriculture Minister Rafael Eitan. Eitan said he cannot understand why Israel should go ahead with any of the withdrawals when the Palestinians have not corrected any of its violations of the Oslo accords.

What happened, the premier's critics ask, to Netanyahu's vaunted concept of reciprocity?

It may seem that in stressing the need for reciprocity — indeed, in making it the centerpiece of his implementation of Oslo — Netanyahu created a new standard that has come back to haunt him. Ministers in his government, not to mention critics such as Ze'ev Begin, are skeptical that Netanyahu will be any more successful than his predecessors in — as Netanyahu has often put it — transforming "give and give" into "give and take."

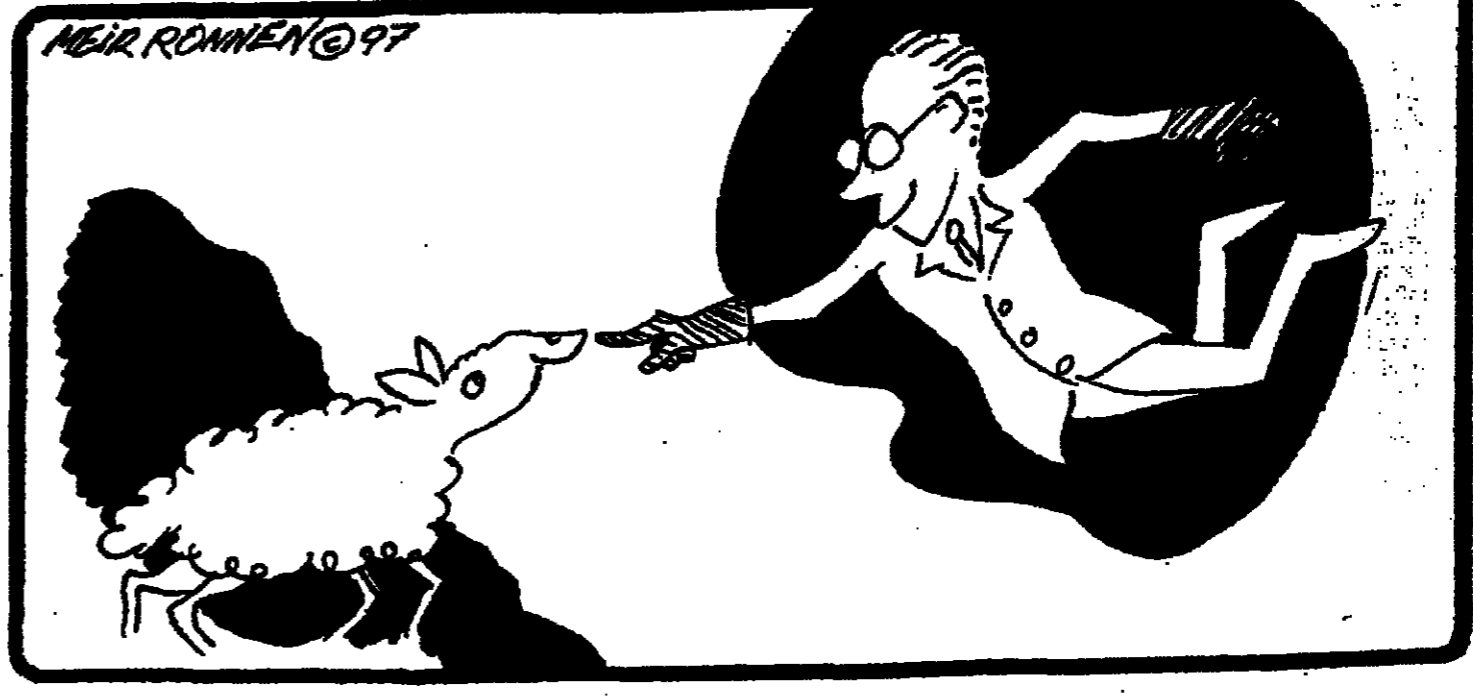
Netanyahu's brave new world of reciprocity was embodied in the Hebron agreement's Note for the Record, signed by Dennis Ross and therefore bearing the weight of a US guarantee. Within days, Israel will have completed the two "issues for implementation" on its side of the ledger: the first redeployment and the release of women prisoners.

The Palestinian side of the bargain was: "Completing" the revision of the PLO Charter, fighting terror and preventing violence (including "preventing incitement and hostile propaganda"), "systematically" combating terrorist infrastructure, confiscating illegal weapons, reducing the size of the Palestinian Police force to permitted levels, and abiding by Oslo's restrictions on Palestinian Authority activity, which prohibit PA offices and police from operating in Jerusalem.

To date, there is no visible Palestinian implementation of any of these commitments. It remains to be seen whether PA Chairman Yasser Arafat will be able to prevent violence in response to Israel's decision to build a Jewish neighborhood in Jerusalem's Har Homa. So far, he is walking a tightrope — not encouraging violence directly, but refusing to explicitly rule it out. He continues to play with fire by making extreme — not to mention false — claims that the Har Homa project violates Oslo, isolates Moslem holy places, and — the most bizarre — seeks to usurp Bethlehem in the celebrations to come in the year 2000.

It would not seem too much to expect from Arafat that he at least say that he is committed to opposing violence. But when given the opportunity at the National Press Club in Washington this week, he refused to rule out violence, instead implying that whatever means the Palestinian people chose in opposing Israel, he would support.

The Netanyahu government is right not to hold up this first symbolic withdrawal with overly ambitious demands of reciprocity, particularly given the strains that the Har Homa decision has placed on the process. But reciprocity is a can that should not be kicked down the road too many times. The pressures that led Netanyahu to move forward on Har Homa will, sooner or later, repeat themselves on the issue of reciprocity.



A failure to understand

MARK A. HELLER

The first of the three further redeployments (FRDs) called for in Oslo 2 is scheduled for today.

Its precise terms are not of cosmic significance, which perhaps is why the prime minister didn't even bother holding a serious cabinet consultation before announcing those terms.

Nevertheless, the context in which the redeployment is being carried out speaks volumes about the consequences of an obsession with tactical firmness at the expense of overall strategic vision.

One of the few evident gains to come out of the government's determination to renegotiate Hebron was American confirmation of Israel's position that the extent of the FRDs should be determined unilaterally, rather than through agreement with the Palestinians.

This obliges Binyamin Netanyahu only to stick to the agreed timetable, while allowing him to define the scope of the redeployments however he wants.

In other words, Israel is technically entitled to make minimal concessions now, in order to retain more bargaining assets for the permanent status negotiations. However, even this accomplishment is more apparent than real, for two reasons.

The first is that the right to act unilaterally does not mean Netanyahu can act free from outside pressure.

One sort of pressure is the expected Palestinian reaction.

Although the process confirmed by the US deprives the Palestinians of any basis for complaining that the redeployment is "too late," it leaves them ample room to complain that it is far "too little."

Of course, such complaints are probably inevitable — less, perhaps, as an expression of genuine disappointment than as a kind of

Arab states and the Europeans, but the most important is the US — and this highlights the second reason for the dubious value of the FRD provision in the Hebron agreement: It reflects a radical shift in the American role since the elections — from facilitator to arbiter of what is acceptable or unacceptable.

This worked to Netanyahu's

Homa; afterwards, they became irresistible.

Thus, Netanyahu's rhetoric of firmness and determination became progressively divorced from the realities of American pressure and anticipated Palestinian reaction; the result is a redeployment covering about 10 percent of the territory, including parts of Area C.

There is no reason to doubt the prime minister's claim that the extent of the redeployment is not part of any explicit deal with Arafat. By the same token, there is no reason to doubt the nature of the implicit trade-off: more territory in return for less pressure and less violence.

The redeployment is not a surrender, as Netanyahu's right-wing critics charge, since it (unlike the third FRD), does not materially affect the real balance of power between Israel and the Palestinians in advance of permanent status negotiations.

The essence of today's planned redeployment is: Talk loudly and carry a small stick

preemptive strike in anticipation of the far more serious controversies likely to arise in connection with the third redeployment.

But a mechanism to negotiate today's redeployment would have required at least formal endorsement by Yasser Arafat before it could be carried out. Without this mechanism, Netanyahu has to be more sensitive to the Palestinians' response to a "miserly" redeployment, a calculation made even more difficult by the announcement of the intention to build on Har Homa.

THE Palestinian factor is reinforced by pressures from other quarters for Netanyahu to show "responsibility" and do something "real," rather than just "symbolic."

These other quarters include the

apparent advantage with respect to the procedure for FRDs, but that will not always be the case, as is already clear from the substance of this redeployment.

From the context, it was meant!

That sense of be

YISRAELI

Binyamin Netanyahu has snapped the Right's spinal cord; the national camp is in ideological paralysis.

Whatever Israel's final borders, the process we are embroiled in can only undermine our independence and destroy the inner force that drove us to achieve it.

That precious sense of being a free people, as opposed to just another vassal state, is in real danger.

Netanyahu's dependency on President Clinton, his craving for Clinton's attention and support, call to mind another prime minister, Lebanon's Rafik Hariri. He's another one who doesn't make a move without a pilgrimage to the palace of his country's true leader, Hafez Assad. There he details his intentions and plans, and either gets the thumbs up, or doesn't.

An unfair comparison? I admit it. Lebanon didn't capitulate willingly. It was occupied by the Syrians, whose army now sits in Damascus dictating government policy.

Netanyahu, on the other hand — the man who was propelled into office under the banner of firmness and national pride — is submitting quite easily to Clinton (whose pressure on him is nothing like Nixon's was on Rabin, or Bush's was on Shamir). What really matters to him are the dividends of power, and the notice and admiration of the media.

Among the strategic assets he has received in return are photos of the president as babysitter, frolicking with Yair and Avner Netanyahu in the Oval Office.

PEOPLE close to Netanyahu at different stages of his career explain his lack of loyalty to ideology, declared beliefs, friends, party and family, by saying that his character is fundamentally flawed.

The only thing that can save the country's self-respect is new elections, fast

Well, that flaw is showing itself now, and no experience in government will correct it.

And the more political and social crises we face — and plenty are in store over the next few years — the more Netanyahu's character flaws will emerge.

Because of them, we could find our national existence in danger. Only a profound, fundamental flaw in the prime minister's character can explain the totally illogical way he behaves even when he isn't under pressure, when there is no political conflict involved.

Recent examples are the decision to give Roni Bar-On the attorney-

and superlatives showered on "friend" and "partner" Yasser Arafat, after Arafat incited the killing of IDF soldiers.

Then there are those utterly incomprehensible things Netanyahu said to US senators during his last

Zevulun Hammer are expressing those very same concerns, albeit behind closed doors.

Yes, ministers and MKs like Benny Begin and Ariel Sharon aren't sleeping very well these days. They lie awake worrying about what this man may bring down upon us.

Yet they aren't doing anything useful, getting together with responsible Laborites, for example, and coming to an agreement about the closest possible date for new elections.

This is what must happen, before it is too late. All true Israeli patriots, left or right, religious or secular, must put aside all other considerations, particularly narrow political and personal ones.

If they don't, they won't be able to make excuses later. They won't be able to say, "We weren't warned."

The writer heads the Foreign Relations and World Jewish Organizations Committee of the Council of Jewish Residents of Judea, Samaria and Gaza.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

MANY THANKS

Sir, — Words are inadequate to express our thanks to *The Jerusalem Post* and its readers from all over the world for the magnanimous reaction to the recent theft of equipment from our center for the blind in Safed. From New York City and Pocatello, Idaho, in the United States; from Munich, Germany, from Holland and from all parts of Israel, the openhanded, warm response which, within three weeks after you ran the story, made it possible for us to repurchase the instruments taken from our music room, has overwhelmed us.

The staff at Dienenhaus in Ramat Hasharon, British Ambassador David Manning, the *Jerusalem Post* Toy Fund, Yossi

Friedman Insurance Agency of Tel Aviv, kibbutzim, people in nursing homes, and so many others, indeed showed how genuinely they cared by helping us to recoup our loss. Today much of the equipment has been replaced by this outpouring of kindness. To say that we are grateful hardly expresses how moved all of us at the center are. We can only hope that the appreciation which is in our hearts with these words enters into your hearts.

To *The Jerusalem Post* and David Rudge, your reporter for the north, thank you so much.

LILLIAN R. COHEN
The Center for the Advancement of the Blind
Safed.

CAUTION NEEDED

Sir, — There's the story told of the old man who remarked: "Well, I'm not so young anymore. My vision is bad and I don't hear so well. Thank goodness that I am still able to drive!"

Our prime minister "didn't see" the posters displayed of Yitzhak Rabin in a Nazi uniform, and "didn't hear" the cries at the Likud central committee

that "Benny Begin is a traitor." Given his deficient sight and hearing, he must indeed be grateful that he is still in the driver's seat. For the rest of us who must travel on the same road, extreme caution is in order.

SHMUEL HIMELSTEIN
Jerusalem.

HABONIM DROR

Sir, — Calling all Habonim Dror UK ex-haverim! From March 26 to April 1 Habonim Dror UK will hold our *Veida* at the Ben-Gurion Institute at Sde Boker, in order to mark "100 Years of Zionism" and to reassess our ideology. We will bring 130 *madrachim* (aged 16-24) from Britain, as representatives of our 1,000 members here, as well as our 30 *Shnat Hachshara* group participants who are currently in Israel. We are also inviting many hundreds of our ex-members from around Israel who have made aliya

since 1929. We would greatly appreciate it if ex-members and friends of ours could attend our *Veida*. The ideal point in the program would be the weekend of March 28th to 29th (when many of our *vanikim* will join us). Please spread the word! If people are interested, please contact Avraham Greenspan (Irgun Vatikai Habonim), tel: 09-743-3192. Many thanks.

JAMES ROSENHEAD
Mazkir, Habonim Dror
London.

NO BARREN HILLTOP

Sir, — As the Israeli newspaper of record for tens of thousands of English readers, you must be careful of every adjective and phrase. Calling Har Homa "a barren hilltop" in your editorial of February 21, is obviously wrong. Anyone passing Mar Elias on the Hebron Road can see a green oasis in the midst of several dusty treeless, Arab villages.

I wonder why I don't hear the environmentalists, whose fundraising appeals arrive regularly, screaming their protests against the planned destruction of this pine and cypress forest, part of the green belt which Teddy Kolkoff envisioned surrounding Jerusalem.

For decades the Jewish and Arab owners of Har Homa paid their taxes but were forbidden to build on their properties to protect the green belt. Along comes the omnipotent government, expropriates the forest and says you couldn't build on the land, but we can.

Is that ethical? A naive question. More important is there actually a "public need" (the language of the Expropriation Act) to build on this green forest. Is there not large tracts of truly "barren" open land in both East and West Jerusalem suitable for housing.

J. ZEL LURIE
Delray Beach, Florida.

A LOW BLOW

Sir, — All of us at one time or another have experienced embarrassing moments, though I dare say, a run in one's pantyhose is not so terrible. But, for Greer Fay Cashman to focus on it is a low blow (February 26). Is it perhaps part of a personal vendetta against Sara Netanyahu?

Unflattering photos and nipping-serve no purpose in a paper like yours.
DIANA SCHIOWITZ
Jerusalem.

POSTSCRIPTS

IMAGINE PIERCING your cheek — not with a faddish gold earring, but with an anchor, a spear gun or a small tree.

Not bizarre enough? Try a 1.5-meter marlin sailfish.

Body-piercing with bits of gold through the navel or lip may be an eyebrow-raising rage in the West, but to hundreds of trance-out vegetarians in Thailand, that's nothing.

The innocently named annual Phuket Vegetarian Festival saw hundreds of religious devotees thrust unbelievable objects through their bodies, then march through town.

According to local legend, a Chinese sealer centuries ago fell into a coma and was brought to a Chinese temple where he recovered. To appease the gods, he pierced his body — with what kind of object is now unclear. The prac-

tice apparently spread. The piercing became linked to vegetarianism around 1825, when a number of Chinese arrived to work in Thailand's tin mines.

Thousands of devotees abstain from meat, alcohol and sex for nine days to purify body and spirit.

They gather at Phuket's main Chinese temples each morning, work themselves into a trance, then thrust a bizarre array of objects through their bodies, usually the cheeks or arms.

Among the stranger items seen this year: a bowling trophy, a cymbal stand from a drum kit, a citizen's band radio antenna with the radio still attached, a musket, a tire iron and a fencer.

For larger objects, the devotees skewer their cheeks with stainless steel spikes to create a hole. They

remove it and insert the main object, which is sometimes greased to slide it through.

The devotees, mostly young men but also a significant number of women, also lacerate their tongues with knives and swords and walk on hot coals.

Ornaments still dangling from their faces, they march through Phuket for a few hours, carrying images of the gods. Teams of supporters wipe off blood running from the wounds.

Afterward, they return to the temples and the objects are extracted. Nurses disinfect the wounds, and ambulances are on standby to rush victims of shock to hospitals.

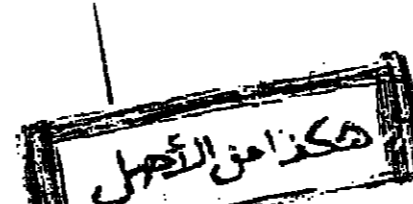
The aim of all this? To achieve good health and a peaceful state of mind.

WOMEN WHO complain they lose their minds during pregnancy may not be exaggerating.

Pregnant women apparently suffer from brain shrinkage and might not regain their full mental powers until six months after giving birth, British scientists say.

"These are very early findings, but it may be that the two features are linked," wrote Anita Holdcroft, an obstetrician leading the team reporting the findings.

Many women say their memories are impaired during pregnancy and complain of absent-mindedness, sometimes "becoming the butt of male jokes." But Holdcroft said there might be a tangible reason for the fuzziness.



Rise of the Shas-haredi hybrid

YOSEF GOELL

One of the nice things about Judaism is that it has never had anything like a pope. Yet in the flap this week over rumors that police investigators might ask Shas mentor Rabbi Ovadia Yosef to testify in the Bar-On affair, Likud MK Shaul Amor went so far as to compare Yosef to that lofty cleric.

The Sephardi politician, who aspires to be the Likud's candidate for Israel's next president, warned that the police must take account of the near-blind adulation Yosef's half-a-million devotees heap upon him.

Ovadia Yosef's standing is of a higher order. It developed largely as a result of the deep resentment many Sephardim felt over the rank discrimination practiced against them in Ashkenazi haredi circles. The leaders of these circles refused to recognize Yosef's halachic erudition and accord him the coveted title of *maran* (master), the highest

First and most importantly, nearly all haredi rabbis believe it to be true.

Secondly, haredi Judaism is against modernism, with which both democracy and Zionism are associated.

And thirdly, the basic democratic tenet that laws and leaders derive from the free choice of the

built his power base on it.

But Binyamin Netanyahu's reborn Likud has totally abandoned any pretense of being a party which represents Israel's middle- and lower-income groups.

In this it is no different from Labor under the leadership of Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres. Despite the party's socialist heritage, the party became the representative of Israel's nouveau – and not so nouveau – riche.

Sephardi Prof. Shlomo Ben-Ami is currently contesting the leadership of the Labor party on an unabashed socioeconomic welfare platform. Should he make a successful showing – becoming, for example, No. 2 to Ehud Barak – it could turn the party into an effective alternative to Shas for the Sephardi vote.

Allen to the vast majority of Sephardim, It is still ruling the Sephardi roost

rabbinical accolade.

Shas was founded jointly over 12 years ago by Yosef and Ashkenazi Rabbi Eliezer Schach. Schach needed Yosef and his Sephardim as allies against the hassidic takeover of Agudat Yisrael – but at the same time he made no secret of his disdain for Yosef's "second-class-Sephardi" halachic learning.

Only when Yosef broke with the Ashkenazi haredim did Shas really come into its own, burgeoning into a mass movement with its own far-flung alternative school system. In the last election it succeeded in electing 10 MKs, unprecedented for a haredi party.

people stands in diametric opposition to the concept of the *maran*, whose sublime wisdom is the source of all political decisions and choices.

When Shas first arose, there was a legitimate debate around whether it was largely a Sephardi protest movement representing a large number of not-particularly-religious lower and lower-middle class Sephardim, or a new form of haredi politics led by a curious hybrid of Sephardi rabbis and politicians who were also haredim.

It is now clear that the latter was the case. The Shas leadership has sought to exploit the resentment of large numbers of Sephardim who have been left behind in the rush to emulate the worst aspects of American free-market capitalism, and have fallen victim to the growing income disparities that go with it.

Menachem Begin realized the potential of this resentment; he

David Levy could have presented Shas with a serious challenge of this nature, but he allowed his overweening pride to get in the way, and flubbed it.

Whether Shas's threat to Israeli democracy is permitted to grow further, or is reversed, will depend on whether its social and ethnic thunder gets stolen by new, non-haredi challengers.

The genetic engineering that created the highly unnatural Sephardi-haredi hybrid called Shas is very alien to the vast majority of Sephardim, who would likely be receptive to an alternative more attuned to traditional Sephardi religious moderation.

In the meantime, however, Shas still rules the Sephardi roost.

The writer comments on current affairs.



Joy, but the battle goes on

ALICE SHALVI

How things have changed! As March 8 approached, my telephone rang incessantly. Reporters and editors wanted interviews and articles about women, to be published on or before International Women's Day, often in special supplements.

My daily pile of mail overflowed with invitations to events marking the day. These ranged from a special Knesset session, through exhibitions of women's art and screenings of films by and about women, to carnivals of song and dance and stand-up comedy, where women of all shapes, sizes, ages and ethnic backgrounds would let their hair down and just celebrate.

Israeli women have come a long way. But they still have far to go

Ten years ago, when I first suggested to Israel Radio that they devote International Women's Day to broadcasting women-related items on Radio 2 (the "light" channel), they were incredulous. Who would want to listen? And, anyway, what was there worth broadcasting?

The following year they did us a favor, with a couple of items sandwiched between the regular programs and the news.

On that day in 1984 when a number of us decided to set up a non-partisan advocacy group dedicated to improving the status of women in Israel, we "marched" on the King David Hotel in Jerusalem, where the two candidates for the premiership, Yitzhak Shamir and Shimon Peres, were negotiating on how to divide the four-year term of office between them.

We demanded that they meet us and hear the petition for equality we were presenting to the newly elected Knesset and the government that was to be set up. Because announcement of the premiership was expected at any moment, the hotel was full of reporters, both local and foreign correspondents.

When we were finally granted an audience and I read out the list we had compiled, cameras rolled, microphones were pushed in front of us, and journalists scribbled in

what was only recently an area virtually closed to women.

ISRAELI women have come a long way. But so much remains to be achieved.

We are still a tiny minority in high-ranking positions, whether in management, politics or the military. And we are nowhere to be seen in the world of Orthodox Judaism – at least, not in public. There are no women rabbis or ever-growing number of women are devoting themselves to Torah studies. Since there is no actual prohibition in Halacha against women becoming rabbis, at least some of them, were they men, would be ordained.

I doubt whether it would be possible in Jerusalem – which should be the spiritual and intellectual center of the Jewish people – to hold a conference on Feminism and Orthodoxy comparable to the one in New York in mid-February, which drew an astonishing crowd of about 1,000 mostly Orthodox women. They spent two days studying, listening, discussing, and openly criticizing the Orthodox rabbinat.

The one area in which Jewish women in Israel have made virtually no progress is Halacha, the Jewish oral law which determines what is permissible and what is prohibited for an Orthodox Jew and, in Israel, a great deal of what is permissible and forbidden to all Jews.

Until the monopoly of the Orthodox in religious matters is disbanded, until we have a true separation of "church" and state, until the stranglehold of the religious parties is shaken off, we cannot attain true equality of the sexes.

And until then, the celebration of International Women's Day, however joyous, cannot be complete and wholehearted.

The writer is chairperson of the Israel Women's Network.

So tell me – who's a coercer...?

In the growing campaign against the planned Shabbat closure of a shopping mall soon to open in Ramat Aviv, the most heartfelt objection is that such a policy will violate the values and lifestyle of the local residents.

So this is what we've come to. This is the new front in the battle against religious coercion – standing up for the right of Ramat Avivians not to have to look at a "Closed" sign on Shabbat, for their right to have all of their weekend shopping options left open.

The locals and their allies (mainly the media, specifically *Ha'aretz*) would, of course, protest that this is not the issue. It's not about shopping, it's about fighting off haredi encroachment. It's about insisting on mutual respect. We wouldn't open a shopping mall on Shabbat in Bnei Brak, so they shouldn't close one on Shabbat over here.

The residents are alarmed. They hear "haredi," "Shabbat closure," and "Ramat Aviv," put them together, and come up with "religious coercion." They're a little shell-shocked; given the way haredim ordinarily behave in this country, secular Israelis have become fairly jumpy.

But on the issue of the shopping mall, the folks in this famously secular, liberal, rich, snobbish neighborhood have got it wrong.

The facts in brief: Africa-Israel, which is building the mall, originally intended to keep it open on

Shabbat. But a few months ago, Bank Leumi sold its controlling interest in the company to a haredi diamond merchant named Lev Leviev, and he decided that on Shabbat, the mall would rest.

Under the banners of "freedom," and "democracy," Leviev's opponents are demanding that he keep the mall's doors open seven days a week – insisting that he run his business the way they see fit, obliging him to violate his religious beliefs so as not to sully the

precedence over their likes and dislikes.

They should also realize that a closed business on Shabbat does not – or at least shouldn't – cause offense in a secular neighborhood in the same way an open business on Shabbat causes offense in a haredi neighborhood. Trying to equate the two is just spiteful.

Finally, the idealists in Ramat Aviv should understand that tolerance is painful. It means putting up with people you don't like

Is it the burghers of Ramat Aviv, who want their mall open on Shabbat, or its owner, who wants the McDonald's to keep kosher?

secular character of Ramat Aviv. There is talk of a boycott if Leviev refuses.

This isn't resistance to religious coercion, it's secular coercion. Leviev is not trying to close down a public thoroughfare, he's not trying to tell people who they can marry, or who is a Jew. Rather, he is the principal owner of the building that will house the mall, and he has the prerogative to close it on Shabbat, if that's what he decides.

Whatever the sentiments of the neighbors, Leviev has the right of religious freedom on his side, and if the people of Ramat Aviv are so concerned with democracy, they should realize that his right takes

because they have the right to live as they wish, as long as they don't stop you from doing the same. Putting up with a haredi diamond merchant and his shopping mall would be a great exercise in tolerance for Ramat Avivians, a real character-builder.

BUT there's a kicker in all this. While Ramat Aviv is practicing secular coercion against Leviev, Leviev is indeed practicing religious coercion against another party to the conflict: McDonald's.

In addition to insisting on his right to keep the building closed on Shabbat, Leviev is demanding that the mall's restaurants all keep

kosher.

But McDonald's contracted to open up there with the understanding that it would be free to sell cheeseburgers and other assorted McTreff. Now along comes Leviev and tells McDonald's: "It's my way, or no way."

Here, he's gone too far.

Leviev has the right to close his building in keeping with his religious beliefs – but he doesn't have the right to force those beliefs on his tenants, not when they signed contracts with Africa-Israel that say otherwise.

But, Leviev may argue, it's his mall, so he can dictate the terms of occupancy. If so, what's to stop him telling McDonald's waitresses to wear long sleeves and ankle-length dresses, or make the waiters offer to *lay tefillin* on customers?

There are limits to the rights of ownership. By insisting on opening in the mall with a non-kosher menu, McDonald's is fighting for its right to freedom from religion, and it deserves to win.

Sort of talmudic, isn't it? McDonald's is in the right, Ramat Aviv is in the wrong – and Leviev is a little of this, and a little of that.

So what's the moral? I don't know, except that maybe in this latest, most unseemly battle in Israel's culture war, we all deserve a break today.

The writer is a journalist living in Tel Aviv.

Much more important than 'friends for life'

ESTHER WACHSMAN

They say confession is good for the soul. Well, I confess to reading *Ha'aretz*, the paper for "people who think," every morning.

Almost every editorial in the paper deals with Israel's position in the international community. Israel's good standing in that community is regarded as its greatest achievement – and more than one editorial has praised the previous administration for the international status it achieved for our poor, beleaguered country.

Even our current prime minister gained the paper's grudging admiration for the Hebron redeployment.

Somewhere along the line we have made popularity, rather than justice and morality, our aim.

As a teacher for over 25 years, I have often told my pupils, whom I prepare for their *bagrut* examinations, that I would rather do a good job and achieve my goal of teaching them English, than be popular.

I have learned that, without a doubt, they respect and even prefer that attitude and that goal to teachers who are – as the Education Ministry presented them – "friends for life." Our

pupils have enough friends; they want their teachers to teach.

Like those of every country in the world, we must use our own best interest as a guide to policy-making. No other country determines its policies according to how they will be perceived abroad.

Let us not delude ourselves into thinking that even our greatest friend, the US, has our best interest at heart. What determines their position is what is good for America, and that is as it should be. The time has come for our coun-

try's leaders to be mature enough – as my 12th-graders are – to make decisions which are in our own best interest, and to stop their preoccupation with that age-old question of Jews in exile: "What will the nations say?"

I will continue to read *Ha'aretz*, for it only strengthens me by providing "outside" coverage of our inner struggles; and I will pray that our leadership is granted the wisdom and the strength to do what's best for Israel and, yes, the Jews.

The writer's son Nahshon was killed by Hamas terrorists in October 1994.

Ha'aretz is a mirror of any major world newspaper. It is almost impossible to distinguish it as an Israeli paper that ought, perhaps, to report on Israeli interests.

When the government dared to approve construction on Har Homa, *Ha'aretz*, like the rest of the world press, blasted the decision as endangering Israel's status among the nations.

It's the same old story. When we give up our land, remove soldiers from our borders, allow Palestinian murderers to flee to Palestinian entities, we are lauded and much beloved by the outside world.

When, on the other hand, we intend to build a Jewish neighborhood in Jerusalem, refuse to leave the security zone unilaterally, demand the imprisonment – or, God forbid, extradition – of murderers, our popularity plummets.

"Is it good for the Jews?" has become a politically incorrect ques-

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 mourns the passing of
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 and extends deepest condolences to
 Sam Sebba and his children
 Dr. Ellen Isler, Director General,
 World ORT Union

The Board and Staff of
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 express sincere condolences to
 Sam Sebba and family
 on the loss of his wife
BELLA ז"ל
 חסדכם יניח אתכם בתוך אבלי ציון וירושלים

With great sorrow we announce the passing of our
 chairman and colleague
MAURICE RINBERG ז"ל
 He will be sadly missed.
 By all the residents,
 members and staff of the Va'ad Habayit
 10-16 Sderot Nitz, Netanya

Our beloved
Dr. BERTA (Bertel) ENGEL
 has left us to join her beloved
Hans Engel ז"ל
 The funeral will take place today, Friday, March 7, 1997 at 10:30 a.m.
 at the Side Yehoshua Cemetery (Kfar Samir), Haifa, Gate 3 (Tamar)
 Mourned by:
 Ruti and Asher Or and family
 Dani and Irit Fuchs and family
 Pauli, Ya'acov and Miri Winternitz and family
 Ruti Blank and family
 Eric Weiss and family
 and all those who love her

In deep sorrow we announce the passing of
 our dear
MIRIAM WEISSELBERGER-RICHTER
 The funeral will take place today,
 Friday, March 7, 1997, at 11:15 a.m. at the old
 Hof Hacarmel Cemetery in Haifa. We will meet
 at the cemetery's main gate.
 Mourned by:
 Hanita and Tiby Frolingher and children
 Magda and Yohanan Gabriel and children

To Doreen Black and family
 Sincere condolences on the passing of
 your father and grandfather
REUVEN ADELMAN
 We will miss you, Dad.
 June Kochman, Karmiel

On the *shloshim* after the passing of my beloved husband
ISAAC SUDAT
 The unveiling of the tombstone will take place at the
 Yarkon Cemetery on Tuesday, March 11, 1997
 (2 Adar II) at 4 p.m.
 His wife, Zeira Sudat, and family

On the *shloshim* after the passing of
 our beloved
ARLINE GRUDER ז"ל
 The unveiling will take place at Har Hamenuhot
 Cemetery, Givat Shaul, on Tuesday,
 March 11, 1997 at 3:30 p.m.
 The Family

The American Committee for
 Shenkar College in Israel
 deeply mourns the passing of
LOLA BEER-EBNER
 Israel's First Lady of Fashion
 We are grateful for the beauty of her life and for her
 support for Shenkar College of Textile Technology and
 Fashion
 David Pernick,
 Chairman of the Board of Governors
 Steven E. Boxer,
 President, American Committee
 Claire Vogelman,
 Past President, American Committee
 Charlotte Faibblatt,
 Executive director, American Committee

Yeltsin VOWS shakeup

MOSCOW (AP) — A brisk President Boris Yeltsin, moving to reassert his authority after months of illness, pledged a major government shakeup and called yesterday for wide-ranging reforms to pull Russia out of its economic morass.

Yeltsin, addressing both houses of parliament in a nationally televised speech, acknowledged that Russia was "still struggling in a flood of problems. We haven't been able to reach the far bank." Looking healthy and speaking clearly and strongly in a 25-minute speech, Yeltsin vowed to focus on economic problems in a bid to breathe life into Russia's economy, which has contracted for six straight years.

The speech was the strongest sign yet that the 66-year-old Yeltsin is making a full recovery from heart surgery and pneumonia that have kept him out of the Kremlin or on a scaled-back schedule since last July.

However, Yeltsin has never shown much inclination for the nuts-and-bolts work of running the government and did not provide specific solutions yesterday for pressing problems such as the millions of state workers and pensioners who haven't been paid for months.

He excoriated the government and accused unidentified officials in his administration of a wide assortment of sins — corruption, laziness and irresponsibility among them.

"The government is growing fat," a stern-faced Yeltsin said. "I am not satisfied with the government."



Big Brother
 Chinese sculptor Bai Lan Sheng puts the final touches on a mold for his statue of former paramount leader Deng Xiaoping in Beijing yesterday. Bai has been working on the statue since 1984. It will be erected in Shenzhen. (Reuters)

Albanian rebels halt army

News agencies
 SARANDA, Albania — Militants dynamited a bridge near the Greek border yesterday to prevent the Albanian army from moving tanks toward towns controlled by protesters.

The protesters blew a four-meter wide crater in a small stone bridge spanning a ravine just seven km from the border and on the road to the port city of Saranda.

Cars could drive through the crater, but it was large and deep enough that four government tanks located nearby could not pass.

In Brussels, diplomats said Dutch Foreign Minister Hans Van Mierlo will urge all parties in Albania to show maximum restraint and respect human rights during a visit to the tiny Balkan state today, diplomats said.

It is important to start a dialogue between all political forces," one diplomat told reporters following a meeting yesterday of senior officials from the 15 European Union countries.

He will stress also that the state of emergency must not be used to curb basic rights," he added.

Van Mierlo, whose country currently holds the EU presidency,

will deliver a message holding out the prospect of more economic assistance if dialogue can take place in a spirit of reconciliation.

Meanwhile, according to a report on Greece's Skai television network, militants in Saranda also blew up a main bridge just north of the town to prevent Albanian troops from entering the port.

More than 5,000 people chanting "Saranda, Saranda" flooded its streets overnight, after hearing rumors that the army was going to use landing craft to enter the port.

Skai said protesters took to sea aboard seven torpedo boats seized from a naval base and began firing into the air as they searched for the purported landing craft.

Residents say that two informal committees have also been formed in Saranda to deal with civilian and military affairs.

Protesters say the defense group is made up of three former military officers and seven community leaders.

The insurgent group has imposed an overnight curfew and

has been trying to set up communications links with other cities, such as Vlore, that are no longer under government control.

Under the guidance of the group, residents of Saranda have been steadily fortifying their town and organizing defenses.

Hundreds of armed militants man roadblocks into the port and have positioned three tanks at some of its entrances. They have also reinforced the barricades with anti-aircraft weapons.

Albania's army has been positioning troops at various points north and south of the rebel towns in an apparent effort to isolate them and block their communication. The towns include Saranda, Vlore and Livina, where Albanian troops on Wednesday clashed with protesters.

Peru rebels call off talks

LIMA (AP) — The leader of rebels holding 72 hostages in the Japanese ambassador's residence called off talks yesterday, accusing police of digging a tunnel under the building.

The leader, Nestor Cerpa, made the statement after the ninth round of negotiations with the government.

A tenth round had been scheduled for today. "We are not going to take part tomorrow," he said.

He accused police of digging a tunnel under the residence where the hostages have been held since the rebels took over a posh diplomatic reception there on Dec. 17.

"We woke up the hostages so they could listen to the noise" of the digging, Cerpa said. It appeared to be a sharp setback to the talks, which ended the preliminary phase with promises to begin concrete proposals.

"We don't believe it is correct that on one hand dialogue is spoken of and on the other this type of thing goes on," Cerpa said.

WORLD

in brief

More than 200 killed in Sri Lanka fighting

COLOMBO (Reuters) — Tamil Tiger rebels struck back at Sri Lankan forces in pre-dawn attacks on two bases in the island's east, killing at least 49 soldiers but losing 160 of their own fighters, military officials said. The rebels overran a small army camp in eastern Batticaloa district and attacked an air force base in Trincomalee district, destroying a transport plane.

Guyana leader dies, successor chosen

GEORGETOWN (AP) — Prime Minister Samuel Hinds was sworn in as president just hours after President Cheddi Jagan died in a Washington hospital. Hinds, an agro-chemical engineer, was a political unknown before he teamed up with Jagan in 1992 elections. Under the constitution, he was next-in-line to succeed Jagan. Hinds, 53, was sworn in at 6:30 a.m.

No wedding bells for Mandela

SINGAPORE (AP) — South African President Nelson Mandela says he will keep bringing girlfriend Graca Machel along on foreign trips, but wedding bells are unlikely soon. Mandela, on the third leg of a four-nation trip, told reporters if the officials who plan his travel "do not object to any association which I have, I may continue as I have done now." Mandela's romance with Mrs. Machel, the 51-year-old former first lady of Mozambique, was made public last year.

Bomb blast in Belfast

BELFAST (AP) — A bomb exploded in a garden in a Catholic area of west Belfast, police said. No one was injured, although a joint patrol of police and soldiers was passing nearby at the time, said a spokesman for the Royal Ulster Constabulary.

U.N. to lead Cyprus talks

NICOSIA (AP) — Cyprus' Greek and Turkish leaders will open intensive, indirect talks Monday through the United Nations on reuniting this war-divided island, a government spokesman said yesterday.

Yannakis Cassoulides said Gustave Feissel, a representative of the UN secretary-general, will lead the talks. He will deliver messages between Cypriot President Glafcos Clerides, the Greek Cypriot leader, and Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş.

Feissel is expected to make repeated trips across the UN buffer zone splitting the island in preparation for a possible direct meeting by the two leaders, Cassoulides said.

He called the indirect talks "the preparatory stage for the establishment of common ground" leading to a summit.

We are sad to announce the passing of our dear, beloved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother

FREDA YAMPOLSKI ז"ל

The funeral will take place on Sunday, March 9 in Montreal, Canada.

Feigle and Rubin Zimmerman and the entire family

Our deepest sympathy to our chairperson Feigle Zimmerman on the passing of her mother

FREDA ז"ל
 Israel Vocal Arts Institute Executive Committee

United Israel Appeal of Canada Inc.
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its Officers and Staff extends sincere condolences to Feigle Zimmerman on the passing of her beloved mother

FREDA YAMPOLSKI ז"ל

Harvey Wolfe President
 Steven Ain Executive Vice President
 Max Blankstein Chairman, IRC
 Amnon Shinar Director General

AMCHA - National Israel Center for Psychosocial Support of Survivors of the Holocaust and the Second Generation

On the thirtieth day of the passing of

MANFRED KLAFTER ז"ל

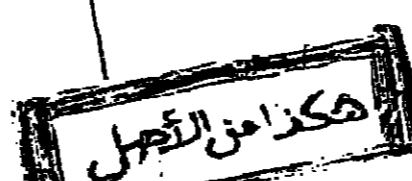
we will gather to honor his memory on Sunday, March 9, 1997, at 7 p.m. at the Bible Lands Museum, 25 Granot Street, Jerusalem

With deep sorrow we announce the passing of our beloved husband, father, brother and grandfather

Rabbi AKIVA CHILL ז"ל

The funeral will take place today, Friday, March 7, at approximately 2 p.m., at the Har Hamenuhot Cemetery in Givat Shaul (one hour following the arrival of El Al flight 008)

Wife, Dorothy Chill
 Son, Rabbi Shaul Chill
 Daughter, Marilyn Glowitz
 Brother, Rabbi Abraham Chill
 Sister, Teme Goldman and grandchildren
 For further details please call 02-561-7577



What makes a military cemetery so dignified is that there is no difference between one grave and the next.

Big-Gen. Pelehuda Gavish

There will be three races: A-Half Marathon, B-Mitzi Marathon, C-Popular Fun Race.

The races will begin at 7 a.m.

For additional information: Municipal Sports Authority, Kikar Safra 10, Tel. 6296642, Fax. 6297411

Jerusalem

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NEWS in FOCUS

The Jerusalem Post Friday, March 7, 1997

Unmarked graves

What should be inscribed on the headstones of the 73 soldiers killed in the helicopter crash? Some parents prefer to leave the tombs blank rather than accept the Defense Ministry's standard wording. Dan Izenberg reports

Barring last-minute developments, Gad Levy and his wife, Hanna, were due yesterday to stand beside the blank tombstone of their son, Shilo, who died in the helicopter crash at She'ar Yashuv on February 4 and is buried in the Karna'el Shomron cemetery.

Thursday marked the 30th day since Shilo's funeral, when the Defense Ministry traditionally unveils the tombstones of deceased soldiers.

But because of a bitter dispute between Levy and the Defense Ministry's Soldier Commemoration Unit, the bereaved father preferred, for the time being, to leave the tombstone blank despite the special significance of the day.

Levy angrily rejected the wording of the unit's inscription stating that each of the soldiers had died "in the line of duty in the helicopter crash over She'ar Yashuv." The formula "died in the line of duty" is the standard wording used by the unit to describe the case of soldiers who have died in military accidents.

The Levys were not the only family offended by the inscription. In the past two weeks, as many as 40 of the 73 families

"What makes a military cemetery so dignified is that there is no difference between one grave and the next."

—Brig.-Gen. (Res) Yehuda Gavish

have voiced their criticism, and so far 15 have submitted appeals asking for the inscription to be changed.

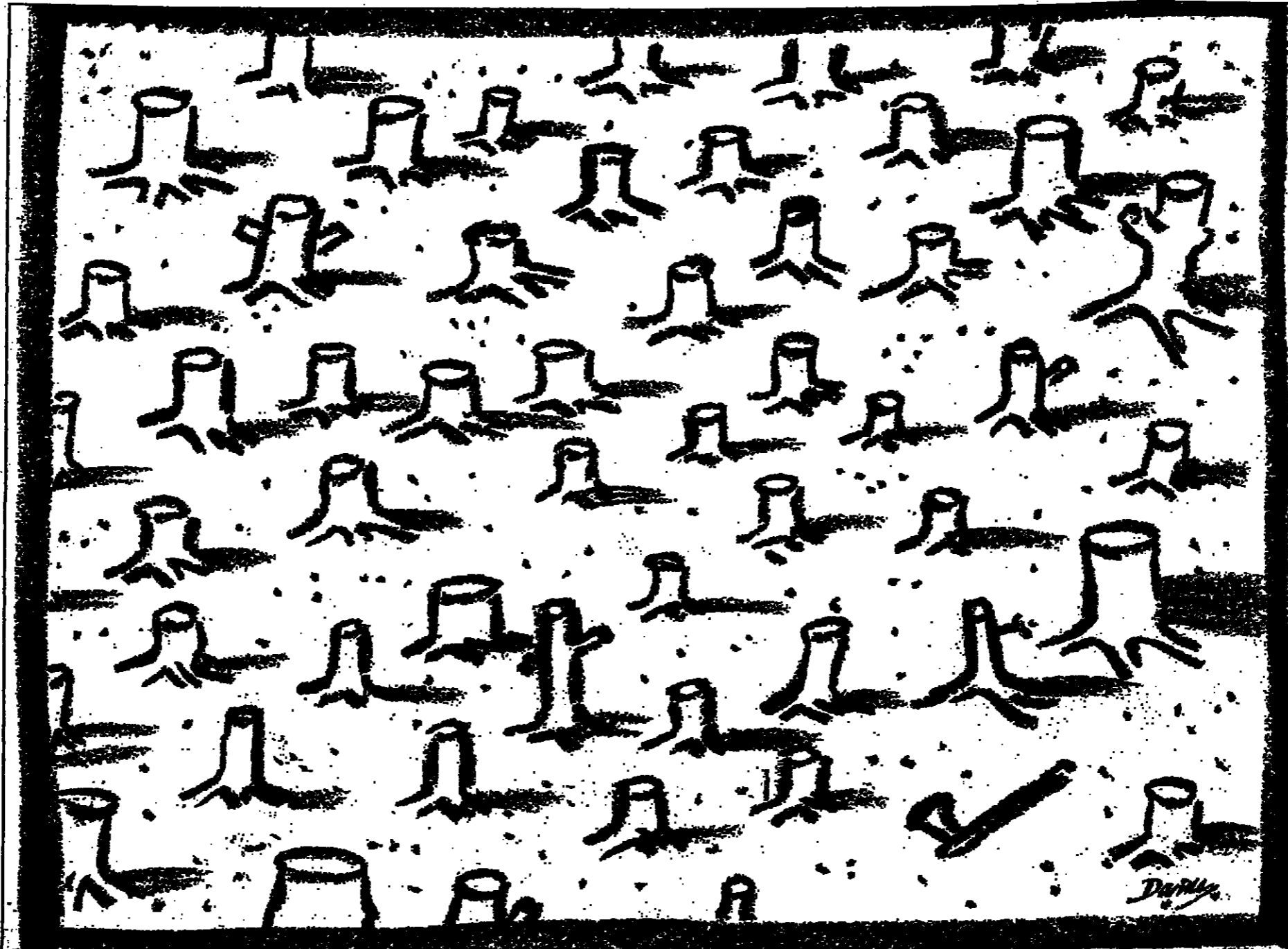
By midweek, almost all the families had agreed to a compromise whereby the headstone with the original inscription would be installed on the 30th day after the crash, on the understanding that soon afterwards, the Public Council to Commemorate Soldiers would convene to hear the appeals. If the council accepts them, the headstones will be replaced accordingly.

THE SOLDIER Commemoration Unit is in charge of Israel's military cemeteries.

One of its duties is to prepare the tombstones for fallen soldiers based on the longstanding principle that all soldiers who die in uniform, regardless of rank, age, unit or cause of death, are equal and should be remembered in the same way.

That cherished principle of equality based on uniformity was first challenged by the family of Corporal Eran Wechselbaum, who died in a training accident at Tze'elim in 1992. The family wanted to add the words "brother of Jackie, Limor and Adi" to the standard IDF inscription.

The Defense Ministry refused. However, on March 27, 1995, a five-justice Supreme Court panel urged the minister of defense to allow the Wechselbaums to engrave a personal inscription somewhere on the tombstone. Recognizing the growing individualism in Israeli society, Justice Shlomo Levin argued that norma-



tive law rejected the total paternalism of the state in this issue. "Perhaps the matter before us should teach that complete uniformity of inscriptions is an approach that the families of the fallen are not prepared to accept," he wrote.

In the wake of his ruling, the Knesset passed an amendment to the Military Cemeteries Law allowing families to add two lines of personal inscription on the tombstone itself, but not on the headstone, where the personal details and circumstances of death appear. The formula for the headstone remained rigid and uniform.

Now, two years later, the families of the fallen soldiers want to take the matter much further. Not only do they seek changes in the headstone, but the changes they propose refer to the military activities of their children rather than particular biographical details as in the Wechselbaum case.

Levy wants Shilo's inscription to read: "Fell in the helicopter tragedy on his way to fulfill a mission in Lebanon to defend the northern border settlements, the nation and the land."

"Shilo volunteered to serve in a battle unit out of a sense of mission and belief that he must be prepared to give his life for his people and country," his father wrote the president, the defense minister, the chief of general staff and the chairman of the Knesset

Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. "During all his years of military action, he risked his life serving in a front-line outpost in southern Lebanon."

Left unspoken, but clearly implied, is the fact that unlike many other soldiers serving in the IDF, and many others in the same age bracket not serving at all, his son, and the other 72 victims of the helicopter crash, put their lives on the line and deserve to be honored and remembered for doing so.

RAMI AND Tami Gonen, whose son Aviv was killed in the crash, held out against the Soldier

Commemoration Unit until almost the last day, when its head, Na'aman Skhayek, agreed that instead of the entire inscription, the tombstone inscription would state only "fell in the line of duty."

That mollified the family which had been incensed by the term "helicopter accident" in the original inscription.

"These words are as good proof as the testimony of 1,000 witnesses that the death of their son was not inevitable and that it had no meaning," their attorney, Shlomo Arvatz, wrote Skhayek. "It makes them feel that the precious sacrifice of their son and

their own sacrifice was for nothing."

At first, Skhayek rejected the request to include only Aviv's biographical details according to the Defense Ministry's rigid formula, and omit all mention of the circumstances of his death. According to Arvatz, Skhayek refused, saying he could not perform "half-finished work."

However, the publicity over the affair in the media this week seems to have softened Skhayek's stand and he agreed to omit the offending words. The Gonen, meanwhile, are drafting their own inscription and will ask the Public Council to approve it.

Other families — including the parents of Assaf Rothenberg, Erez Shtark, Michael Katz, Saguy Arazi, Shai Abukasis and Tzafir Sharoni, all of whom spoke to *The Jerusalem Post* — have criticized the inscription on their sons' tombstones and hope to change them retroactively.

They may find, however, that it is not so easy.

The new head of the Public Council for the Commemoration of the Soldier, Brig.-Gen. (Res.) Yehuda Gavish, strongly opposes changing the tradition of uniformity in military cemeteries. Gavish, and all the other members of the public council, have

lost children who were serving in the army.

"I understand how these bereaved parents feel, but I don't understand their approach and I don't think they are right," he said. "What makes a military cemetery so dignified, as opposed to a civilian cemetery, is that there is no difference between one grave and the next. You'll see that exactly the same words are written on the grave of a general and a private. That's a great thing. The cemeteries should not emphasize the differences but rather what the soldiers had in common and what they had in common was that all of them died in defense of the homeland."

Gavish explained that there are three types of inscriptions. "Died in battle," for soldiers killed in fighting, "died in the line of duty" for soldiers killed in military accidents, and "died during military service" for other types of deaths.

The tombstone of O/C Central Command Maj.-Gen. Nehemia Tamari, who was killed in a 1994 helicopter accident, states only that he "died in the line of duty," even though he had a glorious military career and fought in many more battles than the vic-

"These words are as good proof as the testimony of 1,000 witnesses that the death of their son was not inevitable and that it had no meaning."

tims of the She'ar Yashuv crash, said Gavish. "This is the fairest way to do it," he added.

"It doesn't discriminate against anyone."

Gavish said the difference between him and other members of the Public Council and the newly bereaved families is the amount of time that has elapsed since the tragedy.

"One is traumatized after such a loss," he said. "Everything else loses all importance. In time, however, you realize that other factors must also be taken into account."

But Gavish is only one vote. The Council will meet to decide, on the parents' appeals some time over the next two weeks.

Under the circumstances, the meeting could not be anything but heartbreaking.

Municipality of Jerusalem
Sports Authority

JERUSALEM MARATHON

We are pleased to announce the opening of registration for the Jerusalem Marathon. The race will take place on Tuesday, 8 April 1997.

There will be three race tracks:

- A- Half Marathon 21,100 m
- B- Mini Marathon 4,200 m
- C- Popular Fan Race 2,100 m

The races will begin at 10:00 am.

For additional information and registration:
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Kikar Safra 10
tel. 6296542
fax. 6297411

Teddy Stadium
tel. 6788320

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Aryeh Deri, superstar

'A-R-Y-E-H D-E-R-I,' the MC shouted in a sing-song rhythm Tuesday night at Tel Aviv's Yad Eliahu stadium, as if he was introducing a sports star — a basketball player, maybe a boxer. The crowd responded in kind. They jumped to their feet, clapped, yelled their approval, and started a rhythmic chant of "Aryeh, Aryeh, Aryeh."

To an outsider this seemed a rather odd way to greet a man who is at the center of the alleged Bar-On Affair. A man who, indeed, has been at the center of any number of alleged affairs and questionable political maneuvers over the last decade.

But for the 8,000 Shas loyalists in the hall, and for the tens of thou-

He may be at the center of a handful of scandals, but to thousands of his fans, the 'righteous one' can do no wrong.
Herb Keinon reports

ting a Sephardi liturgical poem. "He will not stop nor cease spreading Torah for its own sake. What wealth and fortune that we have such a righteous man. Rabbi Aryeh, the righteous one who brings merit to the masses."

THOSE NOT counted among Shas supporters may hear these words

but feels they are transparent attempts by the establishment to "stick it" to Shas. "Everyone does these things," Eluz argued. "People saw that the Deri case has dragged on for five years, and they came to the conclusion that there is nothing against him, and that the whole case is just an attempt to stick it to him and

rabbi — and by extension an affront to the whole religious Sephardi community.

THOSE IN Yad Eliahu gathered for a night of "prayer and purity" marking the end of the 30-day mourning period for the victims of the helicopter crash, could roughly be divided into those who don't think there is a basis to any of the numerous allegations against Deri and Shas, and those who believe that there may have been some questionable moves on Deri's part, but that they are not worse than the political norms in the country. The latter category feels Deri is being singled out because he is Sephardi and religious.

The numerous allegations do not seem to have shaken the support for the party or Deri. If anything, this support seemed to have been strengthened. A comrade is not left wounded in the field.

There is also a third camp, but not a camp that was represented in strength at Yad Eliahu. This is the camp centered around Rabbi Reuven Elbaz, and his student MK Shlomo Benizri. They are considered Deri's rivals. One activist from this camp said that inside the party there are a growing number of people resentful of Deri, mainly because his alleged involvement in any numbers of affairs is bringing Rabbi Yosef into the mire.

If this is true, however, it is hard to discern on the ground. There are constantly rumors of dissatisfaction toward Deri in the party, but so far there is little evidence to back this up. Deri still has Yosef's trust, evidenced by the way the rabbi warmly spoke of him at the Yad Eliahu gathering. As long as Deri enjoys that trust and support — born of a long, difficult political journey traveled together — it is difficult to imagine that his position inside the party will diminish.

SINCE Shas first appeared on the national scene in 1984 and won four Knesset seats, the party has thrived on adversity.

Throughout the years it has been bedeviled, like no other party, by charges of corruption. From Deri to Levy to Raphael Pinhasi, the party and its leaders are covered as much in the press by police and judicial reporters, as they are by political and religious-affairs correspondents.

Today the party has 10 mandates, making it the third biggest party in the country. This despite seven years of the Deri Affair, despite the disapproval of Rabbi Eliezer

It was difficult not to think of O.J. Simpson.

Schach and the Ashkenazi haredi establishment, despite seemingly alienating its natural constituency by supporting the Oslo accords and joining a government with Labor and Meretz, and despite an MK — Yair Levy — who ended up in jail.

The reason is simply because Deri understands his voters, what troubles them, what is important to them, what they need, and what they want to hear. He has no shame in playing the "ethnic card," he plays it well, and plays it to the hilt.

Much is constantly made of the haredi-secular rift in the country, while Ashkenazi-Sephardi tensions are largely considered a thing of the past.

But Shas's continued success, despite the never-ending problems afflicting Deri, should be seen as an indication that the Ashkenazi-Sephardi rift is deep and wide.

It is difficult to explain Shas and Deri's continued popularity, despite everything, in any other terms.



Ra'anan Weitz: "There's nothing ironic about my making this proposal." (Karen Benizri)

A two-state solution was always to be

The man who 50 years ago plowed Palestine into the earth has today drawn up a development plan for a Palestinian state.
Abraham Rabinovich reports

In the aftermath of the War of Independence, Ra'anan Weitz began to draw the new map of Israel by demolishing 300 abandoned Arab villages from the Negev to the Galilee. As director of the Jewish Agency Settlement Department, he leveled them — joyfully, he acknowledges — to make way for 500 moshavim and kibbutzim that would provide the country with its geographical sinews and provide homes for masses of immigrants pouring into the country.

Today, at age 84, the man who plowed Palestine into the earth has drawn up a development plan for a Palestinian state alongside Israel.

Although a number of scenarios have already been advanced by academics and politicians for a "final status" arrangement between Israel and the Palestinians, any proposal by Ra'anan Weitz merits special attention. His settlement plan for Israel — a plan drawn up on the "tabula rasa" created by the demolition of the Arab villages — continues to be a model studied by regional planners around the world, from China to Chile.

"There's nothing ironic about my making this proposal," said Weitz this week. "I knew from the moment I heard the UN vote to partition the country on the radio in 1947 that it was the right decision. There had to be two states."

His outline, which he has presented to the Labor Party leadership for study ("I'm convinced we will soon have a national unity government," he says), includes innovations that have not yet been put on the public agenda.

FOLLOWING ARE some of its highlights:

- **Annexation:** Weitz calls for annexation of 5 percent of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This includes a wedge of territory between the Green Line and Ariel, the Latrun salient, the Etzion Bloc and smaller areas along the Green Line where settlements can be incorporated into Israel without the taking of land inhabited by Arabs. (The latter takings are so small they are

not shown on the accompanying map.)

Another 5 percent of territory — a five- to 10-kilometer-wide strip along the lower Jordan River and Dead Sea coast — would be leased for 25 years to guarantee against clandestine infiltration of tanks and artillery. When the lease ends, the arrangement would be reexamined by the two sides. Weitz proposes annexation of the Katif Bloc in the Gaza Strip to prevent physical linkup between the strip and Egypt and the geo-political consequences that might ensue. Of 140,000 Israelis presently living across the green line, about 110,000 would be included in the annexed territory.

• **Jerusalem:** Proposals for the site of a Palestinian capital have hitherto focused on Abu Dis, a built-up suburb contiguous to eastern Jerusalem. Weitz proposes instead a site northeast of the city, a desert-edge tract still undeveloped except for three small villages, including Hizmech.

"I've surveyed all around Jerusalem and this is the only area where there is room enough for a modern capital," says Weitz. The Palestinian state, he says, will number more than three million inhabitants in a decade and require a capital with at least 10 percent of that number in order to provide the necessary bureaucratic infrastructure.

The site he proposes includes more than 15,000 dunams of open space for public building, comparable to the Givat Ram area which accommodates Israel's government center, the Hebrew University campus and the Israel Museum. It would also include residential areas.

Jerusalem within its present boundaries, including the Old City, would remain under Israeli sovereignty except for those all-Arab neighborhoods on the eastern fringe of the city which, offered a choice of being part of Jerusalem or al-Quds, choose the latter. A special council would be set up for the Old City with elected representatives of the Jewish, Moslem and Christian communities living with-

in the walls. The council would deal with the holy places and other problems particular to the Old City and be headed by the mayor of Jerusalem. His deputy would be the mayor of al-Quds.

• **Arab refugees:** There can be no stable peace, says Weitz, without resolution of the Arab refugee problem. Of some 2.5 million Palestinians living abroad, he says, an estimated 600,000-700,000 living in distress in refugee camps in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan would settle in the Palestinian state. None would be permitted to return to Israel. "That is history," he says.

• **Litani water:** To provide water for their increased population, the Palestinians would negotiate with Lebanon for the annual diversion of 400 million cubic meters from the Litani River which presently flows unused to the sea. The water would be carried by a tunnel from the "knee" of the Litani, below Beaufort, for nine kilometers into Israel and Israel would transfer the same amount of water to the Palestinians from the National Water Carrier.

The water would be piped to al-Quds and also permit substantial expansion of irrigated areas, particularly in the Jenin and south Hebron Hills regions and the Gaza Strip. The Lebanese would likely agree to such a plan, says Weitz, because it would be part of an overall settlement that would rid them of the Palestinian refugees.

Noting the proposal by Yossi Beilin to transfer to the Palestinians part of the Halutzta Sands in the western Negev, Weitz says this area could be made as productive as the Katif Bloc — "the spearhead of modern Israeli agriculture" — if water from the Litani were available.

• **Roads:** A road raised on pillars, some 40 kilometers long, would connect the Gaza Strip and the Hebron area. There would be access only at either end so that traffic between the two wings of the Palestinian state would not enter Israel. A similar Palestinian-only raised road would link the northern part of the new state with the King Abdullah Bridge on a route past Beit She'an.

Likewise, the present tunnel-bridge link between Jerusalem and the Etzion Bloc and Efrat would serve Israeli traffic that does not touch the Palestinian road system.

Continued on next page



Deri, seen by Shas loyalists as the 'Prince of Sephardi Jewry,' with Rabbi Ovadia Yosef. (Reuters)

sands of Shas supporters who remained at home, Deri is not so much a politician under a heavy cloud, as he is the "Prince of Sephardi Jewry."

"That, at least, is the title bestowed upon him by newly religious singer Benny Elbaz in a radio interview this week. "The Prince of Sephardi Jewry," Elbaz said. "Exactly that."

Elbaz also composed a song to Deri. "Rabbi Deri the righteous one, who brings merit to the masses," Elbaz sang to a melody befit-

and think, "What planet is Elbaz living on?" But the sentiments reflect the attitude of a not insubstantial part of the population, a part of the population for whom allegations of wrongdoing against Deri, and against Shas, only lead them to support the party with more vigor.

Just after the elections in May, when Shas was expected to lose Knesset seats, Ami Eluz, coordinator of Shas's campaign in the North, said the Shas voter is well aware of episodes of party corrup-

tion, but feels they are transparent attempts by the establishment to "stick it" to Shas.

It was difficult, sitting in the sports arena, watching as the eclectic crowd — ranging from young men with kippot propped atop heads sporting pony-tails, to others wearing black felt kippot and black leather jackets, to the stereotypical yeshiva student in jacket and fedora — not to think about O.J. Simpson.

Just as poll after poll shows that American blacks are convinced of Simpson's innocence, so to those in the arena, who sang "Don't fear, Aryeh, Don't fear" with great conviction, believe that Deri is guilty of no wrongdoing — neither in the court case against him, nor for his alleged role in the Bar-On Affair.

Just as America's blacks have little trust in the judicial system, so — it seems — does the average Shas voter have little trust that the police or courts will deal fairly with their leaders.

In America the Simpson trial drew the lines between blacks and whites. Deri's various affairs have clearly drawn the lines between Ashkenazim and religious — but not only religious — Sephardim.

Which was part of the reason there was so much anger in Shas at reports that Rabbi Ovadia Yosef would be questioned by the police. True, the prime minister may have been questioned, as was the president of the Supreme Court. The incumbent Sephardi chief rabbi may even have offered only last week to be questioned by the police on a different matter, but to question Yosef was out of the question. It was an affront to the

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הכדור האדום

TWO-STATE SOLUTION

Continued from previous page

Palestinian economy: investment of \$25 billion in the Palestinian entity over the next decade, according to an economic model proposed by Weitz, would see Palestinian GNP per capita more than double to \$4,100. Large-scale public works would provide employment to 70,000 persons who now work in Israel and many others. Only 20,000 Palestinians would continue to work in Israel by 2005.

Israeli settlers: The 20,000-30,000 Israelis whose settlements would lie inside the Palestinian state would have the option of either returning to Israel with compensation or remaining in the settlements as Israeli citizens subject to the laws of Palestine.

Any settlement completely vacated would not be demolished. "We don't want a repeat of the Yamit trauma" - but transferred to the Palestinians after negotiations. Weitz envisions those Israeli settlers who choose to remain in Palestine participating actively, perhaps even enthusiastically, in the development of the Palestinian state.

"WHY NOT?" he says. "This is the best expression of peace." Weitz notes that students he lectured to in Alsace-Lorraine, the object of repeated bloody wars between France and Germany, were bilingual and no longer party to old hostilities.

"You can't imagine what 25 years of peace will bring here," he says, shifting with excitement in

500 settlements, including their physical and economic base, was not only approved but, in time, proved itself.

"It was implemented 70 percent in some areas and in others 100 percent," says Weitz. "Our economic growth over 23 years averaged 10 percent annually. No country has ever matched that, not even Japan."

His role in the destruction of the empty Arab villages five decades ago has left Weitz with no feeling of discomfort. "I felt elation at the time and did not think about the fate of the Arab refugees. We had accepted the partition plan. The Arabs did not and they tried to destroy us. There had been a terrible war.

"Every family lost someone, including ours. We lost Yehiam. [His brother, Yehiam, had been killed with 10 other members of his Palmah unit at Gesher Haziv on "the night of the bridges" in 1946.] I think about him to this day."

The Settlement Department directed some of the immigrants arriving in 1948 to abandoned Arab villages but already in the first winter the mud-brick structures began to give way under the rains. "All the villages from the Negev to Haifa were built of mud brick," says Weitz. Villages in the hills had stone structures which proved somewhat more sturdy but these too did not hold up long. Vast tent encampments were erected instead for the immigrants while the new settlements were being

The GSS assessment that there will not be a violent Palestinian reaction to the government decision on Har Homa could prove to be wrong, Jon Immanuel reports

On Monday, the West Bank was on strike, the shutters were down in Bethlehem and soldiers at the checkpoints refused to let Israelis enter. "We know they're looking to attack Rachel's Tomb. They put aside tires for burning. Only the rain stopped them," an IDF officer said gravely.

The tension of the moment seemed to grip the soldiers more than the angry townspeople. A few meters away, Arab workers continued working on the Israeli fortress wall around Rachel's Tomb, which had itself been the focus of violent demonstrations in its infancy.

The protest, legislated by the Palestinian Council, provided a perfect backdrop to the Palestinian Authority head's Washington visit. Arafat could portray himself as the man who was saving the peace process, three years after the peace process first saved him. "Is it necessary to challenge the peace process, and in this critical and dangerous situation to build a new settlement?" he asked at the National Press Club in Washington.

To start building on Har Homa just before Jerusalem is to come up for discussion in final-status negotiations looks provocative to Palestinians because it is not an extension of an existing Jerusalem suburb, but a brand-new project. It sits strategically astride a line

The last straw



Masked Palestinian students raise the Palestinian flag while burning the Israeli flag during a demonstration against plans to build at Har Homa at Bethlehem University. (Reuters)

change facts on the ground, but it is not too late to turn international opinion against Israel for trying.

Yasser Arafat, who rarely makes a speech without referring to Jerusalem as the capital of a Palestinian state, was distraught by the government's decision, which he said opposed an understanding he had with the previous government. Unlike the reactions to the Hasmonian tunnel opening which came first from the Waik and quickly ignited popular feeling, the first and sharpest reactions to Har Homa came from his inner circle. Ahmed Abdel-Rahman, the PA Cabinet secretary, sitting next to the presidential office in Gaza, called it "an explosive fireball which could swallow the peace process."

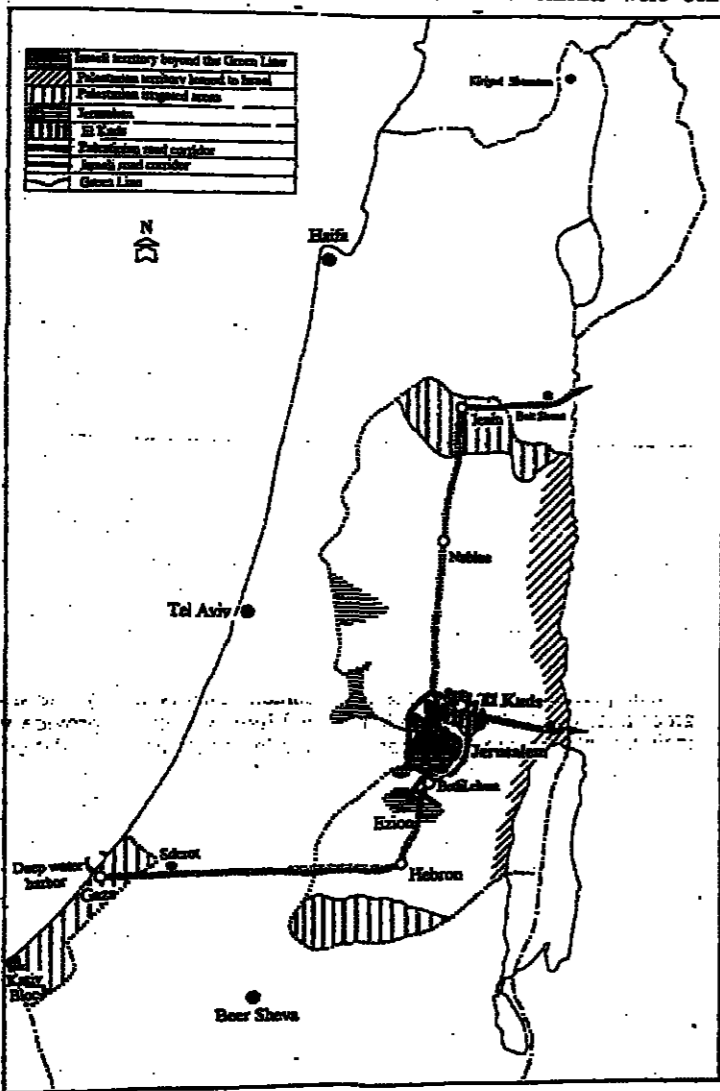
Arafat himself has not used such red-blooded language. He has however exploited the opportunity to win more diplomatic backing from all the important quarters - the US, Europe, and the UN. His diplomatic advantage is strengthened by the situation which will hang over the talks.

Arafat's plan, according to Israeli military assessments, is not to violently escalate the situation on Har Homa but "to build up a case" against Israeli policies step by step, through demonstrations, until the international community intervenes. The march on Jerusalem planned for today is the first step. Only if it completely flops for lack of genuine popular anger will Arafat lose face.

But if Arafat is tempted to overdo it, Israel has cleared the diplomatic field for him. For the US administration, Har Homa is a violation of the Oslo accords and to US Christians he says it is "part of Bethlehem." In the UN it is of course a violation of UN resolutions. To the Arab League he says it will cut off Moslems from Al-Aksa Mosque and raises questions about Israel's plans for a Third Temple. To environmentalists he says it spoils the view.

Arafat is painting the Israeli decision in the worst possible light. "In war one makes decisions without telling the enemy. In peace one makes decisions together," said Faisal Hussein. If Israel has the right to gamble that Har Homa will serve its interests, the Palestinians have every interest in

Continued on Page 10



Weitz's two-state plan

his chair. "The changes will start almost immediately."

The skills that Russian immigrants and other Israeli settlers can provide - from surveying to engineering and computer programming - will be urgently needed by the Palestinian authorities. "Can you imagine what work the Palestinians have ahead of them in the next 15 years? They will have to do what we did."

What was done by Weitz and his contemporaries in laying down the country's physical structure and absorbing the mass immigration of the early 1950s will always remain one of Israel's brightest hours. In the winter of 1948, with the War of Independence not yet over, Weitz was dispatched to Washington to present to the Export Bank the regional development plan he had drawn up for the new state under the direction of Levi Eshkol, then chairman of the Settlement Department.

Upon approval of the plan by American experts hinged Israel's request for a \$100 million loan. The ambitious 25-year plan for

built. "I am one of those fortunate enough to have seen their dream come true," says Weitz. "We had carte blanche to plan the most beautiful and best planned country in the world. And we did."

Behind his current plan outlining the structure of a Palestinian state lies a different dream. As a child in Rehovot, he recalls, he had regularly played with children from the neighboring Arab village of Zamuka. "This may be the basis for my understanding when I grew up that all people are born equal. The more I delve into the details of this plan, the more I feel a strange calmness. It is a tranquility that carries the scent of the land I grew up in. I find myself drifting back to my childhood and the sense of simple values and belonging."

"My friends know me as a dreamer and visionary and when I sometimes raise these thoughts they laugh. But this time I am not dealing with dreams or visions but with a clear-eyed view of the future. To my mind, there is no other way."

ANALYSIS

By PINHAS INBARI

Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat went to Washington with a big success in hand. All the opposition groups within the PLO and Hamas had previously held a "Comprehensive National Dialogue" in Nablus, the first such meeting since the Oslo agreements. All opposition groups dropped their previous demands - including the release of their prisoners from PA jails - in a move that looked like a total surrender to Arafat. It appeared as if they were admitting their mistake of not approving the Oslo agreements.

Nobody can argue with the fact that Arafat has succeeded in establishing his undisputed leadership in the PA area, but it is questionable whether the dialogue in Nablus actually aimed at pushing the opposition groups to accept the Oslo agreement. In Nablus, not only was there no discussion on the Oslo agreements, but the agenda was devoid of Oslo's spirit and substance.

All the leaders of the participating groups, including the Damascus-based Democratic Front leader Nayef Hawatmeh and Nablus-based Popular Front

leader Abd a-Rahim Malluh and the entire Hamas delegation, declared that they firmly objected to the Oslo agreements. What really bothered them was indicated in an article by Akram Haniyya, the editor of the Ramallah-based *al-Ayyam* daily. Under the title of "Another gathering is waiting to be convened," Haniyya underlined the fact that all the opposition groups that went to Nablus had boycotted the elections to the Legislative Council which is the "source of legitimacy to the new Palestinian regime." He asserts that the gathering should have included the relevant forces in the PA areas that have shaped post-Oslo agreements.

The Nablus gathering brought together the old guard of the PLO, supported by elements in Hamas. Their objective was to keep alive the old agenda of the PLO and prevent the younger generation from favoring the main achievement of Oslo: the start of parliamentary life in the Palestinian territory.

"Real democracy should start only after the establishment of the Palestinian state," some of them told Radio Palestine. In the meantime, the source of authority should not be in the elected body,

but rather in the old PLO establishment, according to the old "quota" system in which PLO factions distributed the seats in all Palestinian institutions, including the Palestinian National Council, among themselves, not according to voting but according to political convenience.

"The PNC should also be elected," said the veteran Palestinian leader Haidar Abdel-Shafi, challenging the old PLO bosses, who attended the Nablus gathering.

But Abdel-Shafi was an exception at the meeting. Most of the participants were leaders who had come from abroad, denying the younger generation of leaders inside the territories the chance to be part of the delegations. The absence of leaders from the "inside," such as Faisal Hussein, was noticeable.

Young intifada leaders like Popular Front senior activist Riad al-Malki did not participate in the discussions. Al-Malki confronted the "outside" leadership of the Front on the issue of participating in the elections to the Legislative Council. In the end he accepted orders to boycott the elections - but not without publicizing that he supported the democratic action.

According to the Oslo agreements, the Palestinian Legislative

Council should lead the permanent solution negotiations with Israel.

But in Nablus, it was agreed that the old PLO should lead the com-

ing period of final-status negotiations. If this trend develops further, it means a breach not only of the agreement, but also of its very spirit.

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20:00 - Light Refreshments

20:30 - **H.M. Daleski**, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Philip Roth's To Jerusalem and Back

Chair: **Leona Tokar**, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Living under the shadow of hate

When France's Front National won the municipal election in Vitrolles last month, it marked the fourth time the extreme right-wing party had taken over a town. In Toulon — where the Front scored its first victory — the 4,000 Jewish residents are learning to live in an atmosphere of mistrust and uncertainty. **Eldad Beck reports**

In one of the few bars open at night in Toulon, a patron is discussing the party in power at City Hall: Jean-Marie Le Pen's Front National, as it is called in French.

"You'll see, the FN will soon win other municipalities," the 30-ish Philippe says. "Then it will get into the National Assembly. We can give them a chance to govern. After all, nobody has burned down synagogues or mosques in FN towns. Not yet, anyway."

This southern French port city has become an important symbol of what may happen nationwide, depending on whom you ask. For FN supporters — emboldened by

city council last month. Next year, it will contest national legislative elections, though it may only send seven deputies to the next assembly.

Outward appearances in France's fourth largest city have not changed since the election in June 1995 of Mayor Jean-Marie Le Pen's closest adviser, xenophobic graffiti do not deface its romantic squares, squads of skinheads cannot be seen chasing African and Arab immigrants through its quaint, tidy streets.

The changes there, however, have nonetheless been insidious. A prominent example was Le

pen would publicly admit that they had voted for the extreme right."

But after the FN added another municipality's scalp to its belt — all four towns are in the unemployment-racked southeastern districts of Bouches-du-Rhône and Var — people who had secretly agreed with the FN's anti-foreigner stance came out publicly. Some freely air their bigotry in the presence of Jews and Arabs, the main targets of their hatred. Ethnic slurs and insults are becoming more common in public, Aziza says.

The Jewish community knows that, among Front activists, anti-Semitism runs deeper than the urge to hurl epithets; they cling to the fringes of political discourse, subscribing to every extremist stance pushed in the street, from neo-Nazism to Holocaust denial.

The city council has been more cautious than its counterpart in Marignane, which stopped subsidies on public-school lunches that did not include pork, an obvious attack on Moslems and Jews. The smaller city's libraries have also cleared the works of left-wing writers and thinkers from the shelves, replacing them with books by extreme rightists.

However, a few weeks after Le Pen's victory in Toulon, a small bookshop hawking wares from the ultra-nationalist publishing house, Les Editions Nationales, opened next door to the opera in the heart of the city's cultural quarter. It bills itself as a "nonconformist" bookstore and sells propaganda tracts, FN publications and even stamps issued during World War II by the collaborationist Vichy government.



new Or Nahmani synagogue and cultural center.

Fifteen years ago, Jewish leaders reached an agreement with the city under which it would evacuate its ancient synagogue in exchange for municipal aid to construct a new one.

The FN-dominated council is ignoring the verbal agreement and has demanded that the community repay the city 550,000 francs (\$100,000) a year, which is well beyond the community's means. The council, in an official letter, even threatened to sell the synagogue if the community does not pay its debt.

"I'm sure that if we ask for the money [from donors], we will get a check the same day, but it is a matter of principle," says Marcel Giant, of the local B'nai B'rith branch.

THE SYNAGOGUE has become the council's favorite battlefield against local Jews. One of Le Pen's deputy mayors made a surprise safety inspection, for example, and threatened to close the synagogue for minor infractions. The police officer who had accompanied him later told Jewish leaders that none of the city's churches would have passed such an inspection.

And for the first time in years, when worshippers arrived for services last Yom Kippur, they found there was no police protection for the synagogue.

The community — which, like those in many French localities, was revived by an influx of North African Jews — is now at a crossroad. Many are thinking of leaving. That's not only because of the FN, which is expected to strengthen its position in the future, but because of the deep economic crisis gripping the country. One of the main destinations is Israel. The trend is nationwide, with aliya rising over the past five years from 800 annually to 2,200, more than from any other Western country.

However, leaders of the Jewish community's official umbrella organization say there is still time to stop the FN's advance.

The Representative Council of Jewish Institutions in France (CRIF) recently called upon all democratic forces to mobilize against Le Pen and his party. It is not too late for France, they argue. But it is not clear whether it is too late for Toulon.

The synagogue has become the council's favorite battlefield.

the ultra-nationalist party's recent victories in the region — Toulon marks a new beginning for the Front: it is an opportunity for the FN to win over doubters by showing them that it is in the mainstream, that it can govern responsibly.

For the Front's opponents, including Toulon's 4,000-strong Jewish community, the city of 450,000 is the red line where they hope to stop the party's advance. Failure to do so could prompt many French Jews to emigrate.

Now, "they want to present themselves as being more legal than those who represent the law in this country," Jewish community vice chairman Maurice Aziza says of the Front. "Once they get the vote on the national level, they will do whatever they wish."

Toulon is the front's greatest political asset to date, and is joined by three other strongholds: Orange, Marignane and Vitrolles, where the FN won control of the

Chevalier's decision to ban French-Jewish author Marek Halter from the city's annual book fair because he was born abroad. The ban drew outraged responses nationwide, and Halter was accompanied by four former culture ministers in a demonstration in Toulon.

INDEED, MOST of the changes are hidden in people's hearts. "Ever since the FN victory, a terrible atmosphere of mistrust has reigned here," says Martine Namias, a Tunisian-born Jew. That is the mark of daily life under a totalitarian regime, not that of a Western democracy.

"The day after the election, people started talking to one another in a different way," says Lyonel, 17, who declined to give his last name. "Nobody knew who'd voted for the FN. If somebody you know spoke to you in a strange way, you started wondering whether he had. Very few peo-

ple would publicly admit that they had voted for the extreme right."

But after the FN added another municipality's scalp to its belt — all four towns are in the unemployment-racked southeastern districts of Bouches-du-Rhône and Var — people who had secretly agreed with the FN's anti-foreigner stance came out publicly. Some freely air their bigotry in the presence of Jews and Arabs, the main targets of their hatred. Ethnic slurs and insults are becoming more common in public, Aziza says.

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ON THE eve of the June 1995 election, with an FN victory in the offing, the community's leaders broke with standard practice by calling on all Jewish voters to go

to the polls; failure to cast ballots, they argued, would only strengthen the Front.

Soon afterwards, the local Jewish leadership announced a boycott of the city council, a tactic adopted by Jewish communities, political movements, artists' groups and intellectuals in other FN-run localities. The community reasoned that rightists in City Hall would use any contacts with Jews to generate propaganda, "in order

to show that they treat the Jews well, while we know exactly what their ideas are," explains Aziza. All contacts were immediately stopped, except for urgent cases, such as when the community needed a license to enlarge the cemetery.

An opponent of the boycott was Herzliya Mayor Eli Landau, whose city was twinned with Toulon; he changed his mind after the Halter affair, and cut ties

Jenin's mayor thought it was a good opportunity to twin his town with Toulon, but the PLO representative in France, Laila Shahid, persuaded him not to, a gesture appreciated by local Jews.

City Hall is now applying financial and psychological pressure to force the community into ending its boycott.

It is pressing with pinpoint accuracy on the community's most important material asset: the

LAST STRAW

Continued from Page 9

ensuring that it won't. Arafat is in the strongest position he has been in since arriving

in Gaza in May 1994. He learned in September that he can quickly take control of events that take him by surprise, and here there is no surprise. The development of Har Homa is predictable.

Israel, however, cannot turn back from its decision without losing face, which gives Arafat

the opportunity to turn the heat up and down at will. The situation helps to unite all political factions behind him.

A statement by the PA-appointed mufti of Jerusalem, Akrame Sabri, in the London-based Al-Hayat newspaper this week that in the wake of Har Homa there would be "no liberation of Jerusalem except by war," outflanks Hamas. In the wake of last week's Nablus national dialogue forum, all the opposition groups have pooled their threats of violence and placed them at Arafat's disposal.

the man-in-the-street more than the government declarations have done.

The bulldozers will clearly expose the relations of power and weakness which separate the two sides, only a centimeter beneath the guise of partnership, and it will excite a Palestinian response to redress the balance.

"We are in a serious predicament," says Arafat's chief domestic critic, Dr. Haidar Abdel-Shafi.

"Israel is doing things unilaterally on the basis of its military power, so we have to decide how to defend ourselves against this aggression."

He considers violence an option. He differs with Arafat only in arguing that the current reaction "is a bit of a pretense" because Palestinians should have taken a stand on earlier settlements.

The menace of violence that has been created by the government's decision is enough to help

Arafat abroad. If popular pressure compels him to do more, so much the better. If it erupts it must appear to be spontaneous so that he can take credit for ending it.

Arafat has also been careful not to attack Netanyahu directly. He portrays him as "my partner," but a victim of his anti-Oslo govern-

"fanatics" as boldly as Arafat faces his.

Har Homa has set the tone to the run-up of the final-status talks, making any action the government takes appear to be one of ill will, such as an order to close four Palestinian offices in Jerusalem.

The orders then add fuel to the

increased Arab housing in Jerusalem (but not at Har Homa). This was followed by reports that Israel was prepared to give up more than 2 percent of the West Bank in the first of three post-Hebron redeployments.

But appetites have grown. Saeb Erekat, the PA's chief negotiator, says that according to the Oslo accords, in the first stage: "We are expecting 25 percent of areas C and B to be transferred directly to area A."

The three redeployments between today and August next year are unilateral Israeli decisions. But the word unilateral now has an unhealthy ring. Hebron brought the US into the center of the talks.

Now President Clinton agrees with Arafat that Har Homa is an act of bad faith because it "builds mistrust."

The next step for the Palestinians is to ask Clinton to use his influence to redress the balance.

Arafat has been careful not to attack Netanyahu directly. He portrays him as "my partner," but also as a victim of his anti-Oslo government.

ment. Arafat told Larry King on CNN, "I am sorry to say there are fanatic groups making pressure on him, but if he is facing pressure I am facing many, different pressures." The implication is that if Netanyahu must face his

Har Homa fireball. This actually places the PA in a position to extract concessions in return for not responding in a way that embarrasses the government. The first, volunteered by the government without prompting, is

increased Arab housing in Jerusalem (but not at Har Homa). This was followed by reports that Israel was prepared to give up more than 2 percent of the West Bank in the first of three post-Hebron redeployments.

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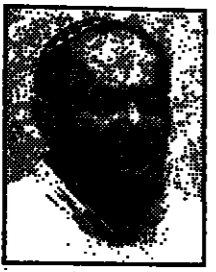
MIDDLE ISRAEL



By AMOTZ ASA-EL

This week, while witnessing the birth of my second child, I noticed a strange resemblance between myself and Moshe Arens. No, unlike the former minister of defense and foreign affairs I am neither an aeronautical engineer nor a retired party hack...

A VIEW FROM NOV



By MOSHE KOHN

The campaign of Eretz Yisrael Arabs to gain legitimacy as a sovereign "Palestinian people" has several tragic aspects. One is that it began less as a striving to attain a positive objective, a Palestinian-Arab identity, and more, much more, as a pan-Arab struggle to prevent the Jews from returning to our ancestral homeland as sovereigns in any part of Eretz Yisrael.

SHABBAT SHALOM



By SHALOM RESNIK

"And he made the laver of brass, and its pedestal of brass, out of the mirrors of the women assembling, who assembled at the Tent of Meeting." (Ex. 38:8)

Is feminism a form of expression that opens a Pandora's box of threats to the religious establishment, or a genuine response to the needs of the times? Fascinatingly enough, there is an oft-quoted midrashic commentary that women played a central role in the construction of the original Sanctuary. Moreover, a careful study of the early rabbinic sources reveals fascinating insights concerning attitudes towards sex, children and charitable giving.

The man who invented Netanyahu

First he appointed Netanyahu his deputy at the Washington embassy, then - as defense minister - he lobbied for Netanyahu's appointment as ambassador to the UN. Finally, this mentor-disciple, patron-protégé relationship came to its full fruition when Arens openly supported Netanyahu's leadership bid, following the Likud's electoral fiasco in 1992.

personality. Shoving Arens to the end of the speakers' list in that debate, along with a host of prominent Likud veterans ranging from Knesset Defense and Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Uzi Landau to former prime minister Yitzhak Shamir, with the thinly veiled intention of muzzling their criticism of Netanyahu's policies, was the rough equivalent of Yossi Beilin heckling a Shimon Peres peace oration, or Aryeh Deri pulling in public Rabbi Ovadia Yosef's beard.

alternative to Israel's cumbersome trampling of its northern neighbor. Instead, he opposed then prime minister Shimon Peres's withdrawal plan, and insisted that Israeli troops remain entrenched in central Lebanon. Finally, and most tellingly, Arens spearheaded a powerful lobby within the Israeli military-industrial complex which sought to mass-produce here the unaffordable Lavi fighter plane.

high-tech industry. Fortunately, Arens's ill advice on Camp David, Lebanon and the Lavi was not heeded. Unfortunately, on Netanyahu he struck it big. The man whose pre-incumbency Greater Israel bravados is now withering into a sweeping retreat from the West Bank; the man who embraced Arens's main source of nauséa, David Levy; the man whose declared quest for "excellence" in public office led to people such as Yehoshua Matza and Roni Bar-On; the man whose frivolous Thatcherite promises have given way to his obstruction of Bezevo's purchase by Cable and Wireless and - just this week - an opposition MK's heroic attempt to dent the Electric Corporation's monopoly, that man was politically created by no other than Moshe Arens, longtime champion of an economically free, politically clean and territorially grand Israel.

The 'Palestine' tragedy

senior British officials, Arabs from the Jerusalem and Hebron areas rampaged in Jerusalem, killing six Jews, wounding 200 (about half of them children and elderly), and raping two Jewish girls. (See Middle East Diary: 1917-1956 [London, Cresset] by Col. Richard Meinertzhagen, who was the local British administrator's chief political officer at that time.) Bloodshed or the threat of it has since characterized the "Palestinians" campaign. The 1920 violence was followed by a long series of major and minor assaults, including the 1921, 1929 and 1936-1939 mass pogroms; the 1948 attempt to throttle newborn Israel, and all the bloodshed since.

and putative friend King Hussein's "International Press Office (IPO) of the Royal Hashemite Court." I refer particularly to the IPO's Jordan Diary 1997, received here last week. Here are a few examples of the Diary's rape of language, truth and meaning. "Jordan is a venerable land." Well, the land called "The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan" is only 50 years old, so it is not so "venerable" in terms of political age. In other respects, I suppose any patriotic story could begin by declaring, "Cockaigne is a venerable land."

vestiges they have come across. "The Ka'aba, built by Abraham as the House of God..." Where is the archeological evidence for this invention? "Immediately after the proclamation of the state of Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt and Iraq sent troops to join with Jordanian forces in order to defend their brethren, the indigenous inhabitants of Palestine." Like the story of the boy who, when his mother asked him why he was weeping so bitterly, sobbed: "Moshe hit me back!" The forces of those five countries, who rejected the UN partition proposal, entered Israel to "defend their brethren" against the Jews' counter-attack.

Hussein not to be bamboozled by Abdul Nasser into joining the Egyptian-Syrian Axis. "On August 21, 1969, the 'minbar [preacher's platform] in al-Aksa mosque... suffers great damage when... set on fire by Dennis Rohan, an Australian Jew.'" Rohan is a Christian, who was judged insane. "During World War I, 'Sharif Hussein bin Ali, Emir of Mecca [and King Hussein's great-grandfather], launched the Great Arab Revolt.'" David Forman's richly documented A Peace to End All Peace (New York, Avon) tells us: "...The Arab revolt for which Hussein hoped never took place... No Arabic units of the Ottoman army... no political or military figures of the Ottoman Empire defected to him and the Allies... Hussein's call to revolt fell on deaf ears throughout the Arab world... [But two months before the war ended] Reginald Wingate, British consul in Egypt, wrote that... it was important to make Hussein look as though he had not been a failure in order to keep Britain from looking bad."



FUNDS



By BEVERLEE BLACK

Strange as it may seem, not everybody in Israel is intimately concerned with the Bar-On inquiry or building Jewish homes at Har Homa. For many, trying to make their monthly income last more than two weeks is an everyday reality. For others, the holes in their children's shoes are of great concern, especially now that the rainy weather is blessing the country. Many of our senior citizens and children can't sleep at night because nagging toothaches are keeping them awake. A lot of old people living alone haven't money to buy kerosene to heat their homes. For me, this is my daily fare, not Bar-On and Har Homa. Lawyers won't solve my problems. Only you, our devoted and generous readers, will provide the funds to solve a few of the problems of our less fortunate neighbors. So rush, rush, rush, send, send and help me by giving till it hurts. Send your checks to: The Jerusalem Post Funds, P.O. Box 81, Jerusalem 91000. By the way, our new phone number is (02) 537-6528. Donors in the United States wishing to receive tax benefits, can send their donations to: Friends of the Jerusalem Post Funds, 211 E. 43rd Street, New York, NY 10017. Please designate in your letter to which fund you wish to donate.

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A role for women

looked into when they were beautifying themselves, and these they brought... as a gift for the Sanctuary. Moses found them objectionable because they were used for the evil impulse. The Holy One, blessed be He, said to him: 'Take them, for they are more beloved to Me than anything else. With these, the women established armies of Jews in Egypt' (Rashi, Ex. 38:8). God explains that when the back-breaking labor under the Egyptian taskmasters broke the spirit of the men, the women would use the mirrors to rekindle their husbands' broken spirits and entice them into intimate relationships. They thus made sure that there would be a next generation.

day of divine service, the laver would allow him to see his own face. In doing so, he inevitably realized the significant difference between inner and outer reality. What you see is not necessarily what you get! There are at least three yous: who you are, who you think you are, and who others think you are. And the converse is also true: Given that a priest often officiates at sin offerings and guilt offerings, and as such is exposed to the darker side of human foibles and sins, he is in danger of developing a negative view of humanity. Hence, the mirror brings home a clear message. Just as the laver constantly reminds him that a reflection is not the total picture, so too people bringing sacrifices should not be defined only by their sin. We are more complex than what meets the eye, and even though we may be guilty of a particular sin, that sin does not necessarily represent our essence. The woman who attempts to look her best in front of a mirror is viewed in a deeper way by the spouse she hopes to please - and vice versa. Indeed, the act of primping must not be judged without taking motivation into account. For whom does she want to look well and why? As

the prophet Isaiah writes, the King Messiah will express his great insight by "not judging people by the seeing of the eye" (11:3), merely by external appearance. And, hopefully, neither will the priest. Third, and perhaps most significant, the mirrors reminded the priest of the importance of faith despite bleak conditions round about. After all, logic would dictate that Jewish women in ancient Egypt would have done everything possible to prevent bringing a next generation of Jews into such an antisemitic world. Bearing a child in Auschwitz - and attempting to rear him/her as a Jew - is the most profound expression of faith. As a fascinating additional detail, the 15th-century S'forno points out that the Torah specifies that women assembled at the Tent of Meeting in order to inform us that droves of women gathered to study the words of the living God! In other words, one could make a reasonable case that the first women's beit midrash (study hall) was established in the Sinai desert. Moreover, the Torah makes it clear that in addition to their generosity vis-a-vis the mirrors, the women are on a higher level of giving to Torah-ordained enterprises than are the

men. After the text in our portion describes two kinds of donations, an obligatory one and a voluntary one, the following verse seems somewhat ambiguous: "And they came, the women over the men." (Ex. 35:21). The commentators explain that women gave first. And the Sages pick up on the fact that only here, regarding the Sanctuary, does the Bible specifically mention that the women gave. In other words, the women also knew when not to give - which is why they refused to give for the collection that was used to make the Golden Calf. Their reward for this lack of involvement in idolatry is that women were given the special festival of Rosh Hodesh - the first day of every new month - wherein only they, and not their husbands, are commanded to be freed from physical work. Until recently, the fund-raising activities of the major Jewish organizations in North America and Europe targeted the male head of the household. Things are hopefully changing. Shabbat Shalom. Due to a technical error, last week's portion (Ki Tissa-Exodus 30:11-30:35) was not published. It will appear on Sunday.

FORSAKE ME NOT: NIS 600 in memory of my beloved parents, dear sister and brother - Esther Berger, Tel Aviv. NIS 360 Anon., Blyssminia. NIS 250 Anon., Tel Aviv, Anon., J'm. NIS 72 in honor of the 60th wedding anniversary of Nachum and Miriam Simon - Bella and Allan Silverberg, Ra'anana. NIS 54 in loving memory of Lilly and Finky Horowitz - Judy Zaidovitz, Hod Hasharon. NIS 36 Steven Greenberg, Tel Aviv. In memory of Gregory Zvi Abrams - William Goldfarb, Tel Aviv. In memory of Anselm Rothschild - William Goldfarb, Tel Aviv. NIS 30 in memory of my beloved husband - Sally Carlos Frister, Herzliya. \$1,000 Mr. and Mrs. David L. Silver, Derby, VT (via PEF). In honor of the birthday of Nicole Katz of Bal Harbour, FL - The Rohr Family, Bal Harbour, FL. In honor of the birthday of Nina Rohr of New York, NY - The Rohr Family, Bal Harbour, FL. \$300 Anon., BeerSheva (via PEF). In honor of my mother and father - Marguerite Millhauser, J'm. \$200 Mr. and Mrs. Richard Krassa, Highland Park, NJ (via PEF). \$100 Ms. Sybil W. Marcus, Berkeley, CA (via PEF). \$50 Mr. and Mrs. Fred L. Stamm, Philadelphia, PA (via PEF). Thank you - Ben-Zion Alexander Rabinowitz - R. Rand Codner, Monterey Park, CA.

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THE WEEK THAT WAS

All the king's men

By MICHAL YUDELMAN

During the election campaign, Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu was sold to the world as a media wizard. This week the magic failed.

Sunday's Likud central committee meeting was painstakingly planned and theatrically produced to be a tremendous demonstration of support for the prime minister, a rallying of the faithful.

It backfired badly.

Instead of delivering steely solidarity and unanimous euphoria, ministers and party leaders emerged with scathing criticism of the one-man show.

The senior ministers and prominent MKs were less than thrilled to find they had been invited as extras and spear-carriers to line up behind the man who would hog the footlights and the airwaves. Their long and mournful faces on the stage said it all.

The producers took no chances. All those with a bellyful of gripes who were waiting to let off steam would not get a chance to speak. They would be allowed, of course, but only after the main speaker, Netanyahu. By the time he finished, people were starting to go home.

Just to ensure that any anti-Bibi whispers were drowned out, groups supplied by Rent-a-Heckle were supplied to the hall for the occasion to hail "Bibi, King of Israel" and harass any dissidents. There were more sinister manifestations when the hecklers venomously attacked

the police and the State Prosecutor's Office and chanted: "Death to the media."

Binyamin Begin, the one-time Likud Party prince and conscience, was confronted by fist-shaking goons screaming "traitor." Sharon called them "mobilized gangs of hoodlums" and wanted to know who organized them. Frail Finance Minister Dan Meridor "got the chills." The gentlemanly Moshe Arens was shocked and said he had never experienced such a spectacle — "a production, a show," rather than a central committee meeting. MK Uzi Landau said the gathering was "Bolshevik" and demanded to be informed how the hoodlums infiltrated the reserved front-row seats, no less.

Former prime minister Yitzhak Shamir went home in disgust when he learned he would not be allowed to speak. Microphones stayed beyond the reach of the fingers of Arens, Landau and Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, who became virtual-reality speakers — scheduled but not called. When MK David Re'em tried to utter a few comradely words in support of Begin, the sound system mysteriously died and he could not be heard.

The hoodlums, as *Ma'ariv* later revealed, arrived not on menacing Harley-Davidsons but in a number of luxurious Volvos and Mercedes, which were ushered discreetly into the closed VIP car park. Although not central committee members, they were let slip into the closed-off area at the front of the hall reserved

for dignitaries and leading party members. There they busied themselves hailing Netanyahu and booing his opponents.

Veteran party members who tried to silence them into some decorum retreated hastily before a hail of waving fists, abuse and threats.

More media fabrications? Ministers, parliamentarians, committee members and millions of viewers at home saw the sights and heard the voices. Only Netanyahu appeared to hear nothing, see nothing, and know nothing. He insisted anyone who wanted could have spoken as much as they liked and he rejected the very idea that anything "undemocratic" could have happened at such an august gathering.

TRICKY BIBI

As though all that wasn't enough, *Newsweek* magazine came out with a banner headline at the top of its international section saying: "Just Call Him Tricky Bibi." For *Newsweek*, Netanyahu had become Israel's Tricky Dicky Nixon, and the Bar-On blunder his Watergate.

In fact that little can of worms merely simmered on a back burner this week, losing some of its dramatic momentum. Nonetheless, the ripples bringing ministers and MKs inside the circle of police questioning continued to widen.

Would the prime minister be questioned again? Would charges be pressed? Would Netanyahu claw his way out of the tangled web of deceit



Netanyahu: A failed magician?

which has been exposed since Channel 1 lifted the stone on the affair? The questions still hovered in the air.

Meanwhile, it continued to sprout offshoots. One was a prompt investigation of the "leaked" protocol from the cabinet meeting at which the Roni Bar-On appointment as attorney general was approved. The protocol was published by Yoav Yitzhak in *Globes*. Ministers fumed and fulminated. They blamed the police (who else?). Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein ordered an inquiry. Some of the huffers and puffers could have bitten their tongues off next day when they learned the "leak" probably came from the prime minister's own office.

Not only that, but the probe seemed ludicrous in any case. This is a country where ministers, their assistants and spokespeople have

systematically and for decades been "leaking" entire pages of protocols from cabinet meetings when it served their interests.

The Journalists' Association pointedly commended Yitzhak for his scoop and said he deserves an award for pursuing the public interest. The witch-hunt into the "leak" — aimed at dissuading future sources from talking to journalists — most decidedly is not in the public's interest.

MONEY NO OBJECT

Let us recall how the government was obliged to make painful but essential budget cuts. Privileges for pensioners were canceled. Health services for hundreds of thousands of schoolchildren were slashed, public transport and city rates were hiked.

This week the AMCHA association, which helps and supports Holocaust survivors and their families suffering from post-traumatic symptoms, learned that its budget is to be axed and its clubs will have to close.

GRAPEVINE

Picking up tips from the palace

By GREER FAY CASHMAN

Honored by the Israel Hotel Association in appreciation of his mammoth effort over the past 17 years to place Eilat on the international tourist map, British entrepreneur David Lewis, speaking at a gala dinner at Jerusalem's Renaissance Hotel attended by President Ezer Weizman, recalled that exactly a week earlier he had seen Weizman dining at a place "reputed to be the best hotel in London."

He was hoping that the president would give him and his IHA colleagues some tips. In the realm of *kashrut* for instance, "did the queen say she had any problems with a *mashegiyah*?" Lewis queried amid much laughter. He also commented on the fact that Weizman had been transported to Buckingham Palace in a horse-drawn golden carriage and asked "is there an idea here that Israel can adopt?"

Continuing his tongue-in-cheek address, Lewis remarked that when he had seen the chairs in the banquet hall at Buckingham Palace standing two meters from the table, he initially couldn't understand why. But then he realized that the British couldn't be relied on any more to stand up for the queen.

AFTER ALMOST four months in Cairo, Zvi Mazel, Israel's ambassador to Egypt, was finally able to present his credentials to President Hosni Mubarak, just a week prior to Mubarak's meeting with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu. Apparently it's customary in the land of the Nile to wait until there are at least 16 new ambassadors before holding a credentials presentation ceremony.

In Mazel's case, the timing of the Hebron withdrawal may have also contributed to the delay. As one of his friends remarked this week: "It's just as well that he got in before the Har Homa decision came up, or he might have been waiting forever."

Last Friday, Mazel and his wife Michelle drove home to Jerusalem for briefings. Mazel also took the opportunity to visit Moshe Sasson, one of his predecessors in office, who is recuperating from surgery.

NOTWITHSTANDING the turbulence of his job, the prime minister has a remarkable ability to be able to clean his slate when he wants to take time out for private pleasures. This week he and his wife Sara celebrated their wedding anniversary with a tete-a-tete dinner at Mishkenot Sha'ananim followed by a movie. As usual, he missed the final scene and had to leave the cinema before the lights went on.

ALSO CELEBRATING a wedding anniversary is former *Jerusalem Post* advertising manager Avraham Levin and his wife Ahuva, who will mark their 50th year of wedded bliss next Tuesday.

AUSTRALIAN Ambassador Peter Rogers and his wife Sandy have been feted left, right and center as their three-year stay in Israel draws to a close. This week the couple hosted their own farewell party at their official residence. Their belongings have already been sent to Australia, but the couple have to stay here till the end of March to oversee the official visit of Australian Trade Minister Tim Fisher, and to attend a

meeting of regional heads of mission in Beirut.

AT THE Hyatt Jerusalem reception hosted by the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations prior to the departure of its leadership mission to Uzbekistan, Ronald Lauder, recently elected president of the Jewish National Fund of America, was being monopolized by one Israeli dignitary after another. Whether this was because of his considerable investments in Israel or because there is a good chance that he may be the next head of the conference is a matter of conjecture. Lauder was noncommittal with regard to the latter. "I'm here because I'm the president of the Jewish National Fund," he insisted with an unmistakable twinkle in his eye.

IT TOOK her a while to stare him, but supermodel Cindy Crawford



Demi Moore

finally got millionaire Randy Gerber to pop the question. Gerber proposed in midair while the couple were winging their way from New York to Los Angeles.

THE PARTY may be over for Demi Moore and Bruce Willis. A German RTL television crew filming in L.A.'s Sunset Boulevard, caught sight of Moore, 35, and Leonardo DiCaprio, 21, who stars in *Romeo and Juliet*, in romantic mood. He gave her a bottle of perfume, after which they strolled through an art gallery, continued on to a restaurant and then drove to the Malibu Beach home which Moore shares with Willis and their children who happened to have been in New York.

All their movements were documented by the TV crew, whose invasion of privacy may bear more responsibility than Moore's apparent infidelity for the breakup of the marriage.

After all, Willis who usually plays a macho on screen doesn't want to be a cuckold in real life. Nonetheless, if Moore signs an affidavit attesting that she did not make love with DiCaprio, even though he stayed all night, Willis is prepared to believe her.

HE MAY not be able to play Superman any more, but that doesn't mean Christopher Reeve's acting career is indefinitely on hold. Paralyzed from the neck down since his accident in 1995, Reeves, 44, still has *star quality* and has been offered the part of the wheelchair-bound photographer in the remake of the 1954 Alfred Hitchcock thriller *Rear Window*. Reeves, who has faith in his ability to recover, said in a January interview with *People* magazine that it's not a question of *if* he walks again, but *when*.

SRULIK by DOSH

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- No taste for greens? That is disturbing (3-7)
- Crack key to code (4)
- Pot plant? (5)
- Silent pictures being shown here in Scotland (9)
- Opening here, now that branch has gone (8)
- Peter out to capture side in the Southern States (5)
- Easily broken up (accomplished after half a day) (7)
- Old timer has main heat-source in front of face (7)
- England's openers too crude to occupy our attention (7)
- Tickets in quarters (7)
- Food & drink to someone (5)
- Get rid of Selkirk, for example (8)
- Saul go far away to find this mountain? (5,4)
- Cold season's start not apparent in Bury (5)
- Common grub found in wheat-stalks (4)
- Half-sovereign reasonable for such work on rocks? (10)

DOWN

- Wild party held in Bangor gymnasium... (4)
- ...exhibiting Charley's relative in bunge (9)
- Thrown off balance in riding school (5)
- Potential potential wooer, according to Rowley? (7)
- Quantities of pain-killing drugs (7)
- Milky juice remaining an unknown quantity (5)
- Restlessness of adult wrens, flying about (10)
- Principal fier (8)
- Lingering impression of cooked tater feast? (10)
- Smoked fish left in straw hats (8)
- Firm elicits an arrangement (9)
- Crusoe's refined sugar (7)
- Miner, diffident follower of immaculate leader? (7)
- Acute feeling of remorse felt in Penang Strait (5)
- Taking off with a high-pitched sound (5)
- Below ancient city, a long red river (4)

SOLUTIONS

Yesterday's Quick Solution

ACROSS: 1 Venice, 4 Whaler, 7 Sleepless, 9 Toms, 10 Etna, 11 Level, 13 Baggins, 14 Terror, 15 Philip, 17 Astor, 19 Daisy, 20 Bond, 22 Coma, 23 Gymnasium, 24 Speech, 25 Nearty.

DOWN: 1 Victor, 2 Mile, 3 Eleven, 4 Wallet, 5 Aton, 6 Repair, 7 Smuggling, 8 Staircase, 11 Livid, 13 Lesty, 15 Fabian, 16 Funch, 17 Arson, 18 Yearly, 21 Dyke, 22 Cuba.

QUICK CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- eg Acute (5)
- Sea duck (6)
- Weariness (7)
- Fissure, cloven (5)
- Necessary vase? (5)
- Vivid red (7)
- Makes airtight (4)
- Abyss (5)
- Grasslike plant (5)
- Golf club (4)
- Range of colours (7)
- Cunning (5)
- Constellation (5)
- Expressionless of face (7)
- Concur (5)
- Alternative (5)

DOWN

- Neat, dapper (5)
- Very drunk (7)
- Lay oneself open (5)
- Crepuscle (7)
- Blazing (5)
- Holiest city of Islam (5)
- Prejudicious (5)
- As well (4)
- Send forth (4)
- Single portion of food (7)
- Bewitch (7)
- Animal track (5)
- Prepared (5)
- Make up for (5)
- Strained (5)
- Abundant (5)

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TWO DAYS ON THE GOLAN

Widely recognized as perhaps Israel's most important security asset, the Golan is for the moment on the back burner. But it won't be there for long. So what better time than now to join Shorashim and The Jerusalem Post for an in-depth, English-speaking two day tour of the area. We'll visit the settlements, examine the security issues and view the terrain, the animals, the water and the beauty.

We'll visit Beit Gavriel on the Kinneret, Mitzpe Shalom (near Kfar Haruv), the yeshiva at Hispin, the wineries at Katzrin, the Druse village of Ein Kinya, Emek Habacha, Gamla, and more. Overnight at Kibbutz Kfar Blum, with a lecture on the wolves of the Golan.

The date: Wednesday/Thursday, April 30/ May 1, 1997.

The price: NIS 595. Includes transportation from Jerusalem or Tel Aviv and back, background lectures and on-the-spot explanations, entrance to all sites, half-board accommodation in a double room, lunch and dinner on the first day, breakfast and lunch-box on the second. Pick-up and drop-off along the route when possible, by prior arrangement.

Reservations and further information:
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Tel. 02-566-6231 (9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.)
Ask for Michal, Vered, or Varda.

هكادمان الجليل

Friday March 7, 1997

BITS & BY JENNIFER P

Cellcom sele

Comty gets M

Finjan sets fir

Golden Screen

Fixing your Mic

QXI, Mars estab

Teledata receive

VocalTec, Motor

COMMSTOCK EVERYTHING YO

Friday
March 7, 1997

BUSINESS & FINANCE

BITS & BYTES

Cellcom selects Nortel's technology

Cellcom recently announced that it will use Northern Telecom's Wireless Intelligent Network Services portfolio in its next generation of cellular telephones. Nortel's WIN Services portfolio encompasses a variety of services, including "find-me," fax messaging, call screening, voice messaging and voice mail callback.

Comfy gets NIS 850,000 Australian order

Comfy Interactive Movies of Givatayim has received an NIS 850,000 order for keyboards and software. The two companies also signed a distribution agreement whereby Morse will distribute the Comfy toddler and infant's keyboard, plus related software products, in Australia. Morse is a computer software and hardware distributor to the Australian market, and an Internet service provider. Comfy makes children's products.

Finjan sets fire-wall standard

Six of the world's leading companies engaged in the development of fire-wall protection systems have announced their adoption of technology developed by Finjan as standard in the software packages they produce. The companies are Checkpoint of Israel, which has a 40 percent share of the fire-wall market, Raptor, Trusted, Digital, Milkway and Network-1. The Internet standards authorities in the USA has approved Finjan's protection system for Java applications, making the Netanya-based company's technology the leading protection standard.

Golden Screens completes \$1.5m. placement

The Golden Screens Group, a Tel Aviv-based interactive multimedia systems developer, recently announced the completion of a \$1.5m. private placement. The company develops the software and applications for interactive kiosk terminals, which allow people to access information through electronic databases. The company is currently working on a multi-million project to equip the City of New York with its electronic databases.

Fixing your Microsoft Internet software

A program to correct a serious flaw in the Microsoft Internet Explorer - an Internet browser - can be downloaded from the Microsoft-Israel site. The corrective program for the Hebrew version of the Explorer can be downloaded from <http://www.microsoft.com/israel> and also will be available via the major Internet suppliers. The flaw allowed illegal access to computers from sites that they had reached via the Internet.

QXI, Mars establish Japan high-tech project

Mars Engineering Ltd., one of Japan's top three computer-games companies, and QXI, the company's local representative, have announced plans to establish an incubator in Japan designed to develop Israeli technologies. Mars' president, Hirokazu Matsunami, is expected to visit Israel at the end of the month to sign an agreement with QXI and to review potential ideas for the project.

Teledata receives \$5m. order from Brazil

Teledata Communications Ltd. (Nasdaq: TLDCF) recently reported that it received a \$5m. order for its DCS-20E telecommunications multiplexer system from a Brazilian telecommunications operator. The Herzliya-based company has a subsidiary in Brazil, which Teledata considers to be a potential growth market. Teledata designs wireline and wireless customer access network equipment for telephone operating companies. The company's 1996 sales totaled \$19.6m.

VocalTec, Motorola cooperate on Net phone

VocalTec (Nasdaq: VOCLF) and Motorola International have drawn up a cooperation agreement in the area of voice technology. The two companies signed a memorandum of understanding under which the Internet software products division of Motorola formed a systems integration unit that will deliver VocalTec's voice-over-Internet technology for mainstream commercial use.

Illegal cartel heads face dismissal

By GALIT LIPKIS BECK

Supervisor of Insurance Doron Shorer is considering calling for the resignation of the six insurance company heads convicted of price-fixing and other illegal activities in restraint of trade, a Treasury spokesperson said yesterday.



Supervisor of Insurance Shorer may call for insurance heads' suspensions. (Assaf Shilo/Israel Sun)

As part of a plea bargain arrangement, Jerusalem District Court Judge Yohanan Adiel on Wednesday convicted six insurance companies, their managers and the Association of Insurance Companies of creating an illegal cartel in 1991 and 1992. The verdict will be given next Friday.

At this stage, it is unclear whether the managers will be able to continue in their positions. Shorer will receive legal recommendations based on the Insurance Business Law and wait for Adiel's final verdict before deciding whether to take actions, the Treasury spokesperson said.

Legal advisors to the insurance companies, like Prof. Yosef Gross and attorney Eli Zohar, said the managers' confessions and their suspended prison terms are not dishonorable or a violation of the insurance law. Furthermore, the Attorney-General's Office has said in the past that the supervisor does

not have the authority to suspend the managers. Assuming Shorer decides it is in the public's interest to fire the managers, he must receive the Knesset's backing and approach the boards of directors of the companies concerned with the demand that they dismiss the managers.

Attorney John Barnea, legal advisor to the Association of Insurance Companies, said the supervisor has the authority to threaten to cancel insurance firms' licenses in order to protect the public, but in most cases does not have the authority to fire the managers. Only in very special circumstances, he said, does the supervisor have the authority to suspend managers for a maximum period of three months.

Shorer could not be reached for comment. The managers and companies were convicted of conspiring to fix premiums and other price components, such as special discounts and agent's fees. They also acted as a cartel in eliminating coverage of certain insurance items, raising insurance co-payments and dividing up the market between them. The companies committed these illegal acts in three sectors: homeowners' insurance; corporate insurance; and insurance for mechanical equipment.

The six companies convicted are Migdal, Clal Insurance, Hamagen, Sahar, Zion and Menorah. The convicted managers include Uzi Levy, managing director of Migdal; Rimon Ben-Shaul, managing director of Clal; managing director of Zion, Rami Taiber; former general manager of Hamagen, Meir Shani; former managing director of Sahar, Menahem Harpaz; and deputy managing director of Menorah, Ari Kelman. Other senior officials that managed the property insurance divisions also were convicted.

The Phoenix and Ayalon insurance firms decided not to join the plea bargain. Charge sheets will be filed against these firms in the near future.

At the court hearing, the accused managers and companies confessed to clauses included in the indictment and agreed to maximum fines of NIS 6 million for each large firm and NIS 3m. for each small firm. The managers will be charged with fines ranging from NIS 150,000 to NIS 300,000 and get a suspended prison sentence of up to two years.

The State Attorney, represented by advocate Shimon Dolan, said the defendants' actions prevented free competition in the insurance field. He said the actions were very serious since they were carried out by senior managers.



Buddy, can you spare a pfennig? Germans wait outside a Berlin employment office yesterday after the government announced unemployment rose to 4.3 million in February. Though the increase was smaller than expected, German unemployment is at its highest level since the 1930s. The joblessness hampers Germany's attempts to cut its budget deficit and also reduces its ability to pressure other European countries over the economic changes needed before the institution of a single European currency. (Reuters)

Ex-Amot exec Topol gets 15 years

By GALIT LIPKIS BECK

Yosef Topol, the former controller of Amot Investments convicted of stealing NIS 17 million from the company, was sentenced to 15 years in prison yesterday by the Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court.

As part of a plea-bargain, Topol was also required to return NIS 3.67m. to Amot, a subsidiary of Bank Hapoalim.

Under the plea bargain, Topol admitted to 53 counts of theft and forgery amounting to NIS 17 m.

The court said the former controller took advantage of his senior position to forge dozens of checks for hundreds of thousands of shekels, which he signed under the names of managers in the company and deposited in his own and family members' bank accounts. To cover up his actions, Topol put false entries in the company's books under the names of companies working with Amot.

Judge Nathan Amit said in his verdict he found it "surprising" that this could happen in a public company such as Amot.

"Under the noses of the company managers and the internal and external controllers, the accused succeeded, not once and not twice, but tens of times to steal huge sums of millions of shekels from the company by forging hundreds of documents without anything being discovered," he said.

The judge recommended that Amot re-examine the operation of its supervision and control divisions.

Topol served as controller of Amot Investments for 26 years. Amot has also filed an NIS 20 million civil suit against him.

As part of the plea bargain, most of the charges against Topol's son and daughter-in-law, Eran and Yasmin Topol, were dropped. Eran, who was convicted of foreign currency violations was given a 6-month suspended prison sentence and a fine of NIS 10,000. All charges against Yasmin were dropped.

Jordan agrees to keep Eilat airport open

By HAIM SHAPIRO

Domestic flights would continue to land at the Eilat Airport, and not at the proposed Israeli-Jordanian airport to be established at Akaba, according to a draft agreement drawn up this week. Eilat Mayor Gabi Kadosh and Aharon Dekel, chairman of the Eilat Hotel Association, who both

favor keeping the Eilat Airport, had feared that during his visit to Jordan, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu would yield to Jordanian pressure to redirect all flights to Eilat to the proposed joint airport. Kadosh had initiated a campaign under the title, "Bibi is selling out Eilat."

However, the Transport Ministry announced this week

that Ministry Director-General Nahoum Langental had gained Jordanian acceptance of a draft agreement which would reserve the joint airport for international flights, while the Eilat Airport, located in the center of the town, would continue to serve for domestic flights.

Upon his return from Jordan on Wednesday night, Langental

announced that the building of the joint airport could begin in a matter of months. According to the agreement, the airfield itself is to be in Jordan, with the connecting Israeli terminal on Israeli territory. Two subcommittees are to deal with the air rights of the two countries and the establishment of a joint company to operate the airport.

Tadiran, Exide sign lithium battery deal

By Jerusalem Post Staff

Tadiran said yesterday it signed a memorandum of understanding with US company Exide Corporation for the joint production of lithium batteries.

Exide, based in Michigan, is the world leader in manufacturing and marketing starting, lighting, ignition and industrial lead acid batteries. It has a market share of 40%, according to Tadiran.

Tadiran said the two sides plan strategic cooperation that would combine Tadiran's technology

and research and development capabilities with Exide's worldwide marketing organization. The terms of the agreement have not yet been set.

Tadiran said it had invested \$20 million in developing the batteries and another \$10 m. in building an automated production line capable of turning out about 8 million batteries annually.

The lightweight batteries have a life span of more than 10 years, and are designed for use in cellular telephones, medical equipment and military hardware.

West Coast S&Ls in \$6.6b. merger

SEATTLE (Reuters) - Great Western Financial Corp., attempting to fend off a hostile takeover bid by A.H. Ahmanson and Co., said yesterday it agreed to be acquired by Washington Mutual Savings Bank for \$6.5 billion.

The agreement tops the \$6.1b. bid from Ahmanson.

Great Western and Washington Mutual said the merger would rank Washington Mutual third in deposits in the state of California and give it entry to Florida, where Great Western had \$7.1b. in deposits at the end of 1996.

Great Western is based in Chatsworth, California, and Washington Mutual is based in Seattle, Washington. Based on 1996 results, the combined companies would have assets of

\$87.4b. and deposits of \$52.7b. Washington Mutual had been considered a possible rival bidder since Ahmanson made its unsolicited approach last month.

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will hold an international conference of experts and scholars from Israel and abroad on the topic:

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The conference will be held on Wednesday - Thursday, March 12-13, 1997, at Tel Aviv University and at the Center for Technological Education, Holon.

At the conclusion of the conference, on March 13, a dedication ceremony will be held for the Library of the Inter-University Center for Terrorism Studies, at the Center for Technological Education, Holon, with the participation of The George Washington University, Washington, D.C.

The public is invited.

For details and registration: Tel Aviv University: Tel. 03-640-3560; Fax 03-642-4264.
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ISRAEL MONEY MARKETS				
Patah (foreign currency deposit rates) (11.9.96)				
Currency (deposit for)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS	
U.S. dollar (\$250,000)	4.750	5.000	5.375	
German mark	1.9415	1.9725	1.50	2.01
Pound sterling (£100,000)	3.875	4.000	4.250	
German mark (DM 200,000)	1.825	1.825	2.125	
Swiss franc (SF 200,000)	0.625	0.625	0.750	1.000
Yen (10 million yen)	-	-	-	-

(Rates vary higher or lower than indicated according to deposit)

Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (6.3.97)					
	CHECKS AND TRANSFERS		BANKNOTES		Rep. Rates**
	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	
Currency basket	3.6102	3.6685			3.6467
U.S. dollar	3.5351	3.5900	3.27	3.44	3.5700
German mark	1.9415	1.9725	1.50	2.01	1.9507
Pound sterling	5.3815	5.4683	5.28	5.55	5.4254
French franc	0.5767	0.5880	0.56	0.60	0.5812
Japanese yen (100)	2.7481	2.7904	2.89	2.88	2.7738
Dutch florin	1.7250	1.7529	1.89	1.78	1.7427
Swiss franc	2.2440	2.2902	2.20	2.32	2.2551
Swedish krona	0.4350	0.4421	0.42	0.45	0.4391
Norwegian krona	0.4775	0.4853	0.48	0.50	0.4848
Danish krone	0.5083	0.5176	0.50	0.53	0.5142
Finnish mark	0.6510	0.6615	0.63	0.68	0.6672
Canadian dollar	2.4398	2.4782	2.39	2.52	2.4657
Australian dollar	2.9210	2.9539	2.57	2.71	2.6500
S. African rand	0.7485	0.7588	0.67	0.71	0.7559
Belgian franc (10)	0.9413	0.9585	0.92	0.97	0.9501
Austrian schilling (10)	2.7803	2.8035	2.71	2.85	2.7850
Italian lira (1000)	1.9524	1.9839	1.91	2.02	1.9713
Jordanian dinar	4.8400	4.9800	4.84	4.96	4.7770
Egyptian pound	0.9500	1.0300	0.95	1.03	1.0194
ECU	3.7803	3.8413	-	-	3.8172
Irish punt	5.2010	5.2848	5.11	5.36	5.2451
Spanish peseta (100)	2.2859	2.3330	2.25	2.37	2.3185

*These rates vary according to bank. **Bank of Israel.
SOURCE: BANK LEUMI

ISRAELI SHARES IN NEW YORK

Table listing Israeli shares in New York with columns for share name, last price, and change. Includes AMEX and NASDAQ sections.

Table listing various Israeli companies with columns for last price and change.

Table listing various Israeli companies with columns for last price and change.

Table listing various Israeli companies with columns for last price and change.

TASE ROUNDUP

Stocks extend gains

Mishtanim 257.69 ▲ 0.73% Maof 265.42 ▲ 0.77%

By ROBERT DANIEL. Stocks advanced for a fourth day yesterday, led by jumps in holding companies Tadiran Ltd. and Israel Land Development Co.

Ltd. and Bank Leumi. The Mishtanim Index rose 0.73 percent to 257.69, while the Maof Index moved up 0.77% to 265.42.

Chemicals, up 2.75% to 3.98 on trading of NIS 6m. of shares. Tadiran leaped 5% to 95.68.

MISHTANIM LEADING HOUSING STOCKS

Table listing leading housing stocks in Mishtanim with columns for last price and change.

Table listing various companies with columns for last price and change.

Table listing various companies with columns for last price and change.

Table listing various companies with columns for last price and change.

Key Representative Rates

Table showing key representative rates for US Dollar, Sterling, and Mark.

NEW YORK MARKET INDEXES

Table listing New York market indexes with columns for last price and change.

WORLD MARKET ROUNDUP

Eurobourses up on strong Dow hopes

LONDON (Reuters) - British blue chips surged to a record high for the third day running, spurred on by a resilient Wall Street and a more relaxed view about interest rates and stock valuations.

day up 52.61 points to 3,417.60 points. In post-bourse trade the Dax stood at 3,396.55.

INTERNATIONAL SHARES

Table listing international shares with columns for last price and change.

Table listing various international companies with columns for last price and change.

Table listing various international companies with columns for last price and change.

Table listing various international companies with columns for last price and change.

NYSE STOCKS

Table listing NYSE stocks with columns for last price and change.

DOLLAR CROSSRATES (US)

Table showing dollar crossrates for various currencies.

SPOT MARKET METALS (US)

Table showing spot market metals prices.

NEW YORK METAL FUTURES

Table showing New York metal futures prices.

LONDON METAL FIXES

Table showing London metal fixes prices.

DATA COMMUNICATIONS VIA

Table showing data communications via prices.

Foreign financial data courtesy of CommStock Trading Ltd.

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Table showing foreign financial data.

WALL STREET REPORT

Dow drops slightly

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Stock prices ended slightly lower yesterday as Wall Street turned cautious ahead of today's important jobs report for February.

WALL STREET REPORT

COALITION

Labor's executive, meanwhile, promised Netanyahu a parliamentary "safety net" on this issue. MK Ehad Barak stressed that the "safety net" will be restricted to the pullback alone, and not to anything related to the Bar-On Affair.

WALL STREET REPORT

CABINET

National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon called upon the government not to yield Area C for now, as it can retain it as a bargaining chip for the future.

WALL STREET REPORT

COALITION

Members of the Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria and Gaza emerged from a meeting with Netanyahu last night looking somber and anxious.

WALL STREET REPORT

COALITION

According to one unconfirmed report, the IDF judge advocate-general said that Israel is obligated to yield parts of Area C during every pullback, but ministers were appealing to Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinfeld to see if this was indeed the case.

WALL STREET REPORT

COALITION

"The government is voluntarily offering to withdraw from areas without any connection to the Oslo agreement," said Dornb, in a radio interview.

WALL STREET REPORT

COALITION

The figure is based on the Palestinian view that 80% to 90% of the territory of the West Bank should be in Palestinian hands by August of next year.

WALL STREET REPORT

COALITION

"For some, a stone's throw from their house will turn into Area A," she said. "The worst-case scenario," Leizer said, "is that by the end of the third stage the government will agree to withdraw from up to 20% of Area C. But the real picture of what is not clear to anyone."



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NEWS

in brief

IDF further eases closure

The IDF further eased the closure on the territories, lowering the age of Palestinian laborers eligible for work permits in Israel and increasing to 400 the number of Palestinian Authority officials allowed to travel between the West Bank and Gaza Strip. According to the new regulations, married Palestinian males over the age of 24 who have security clearances now will be eligible for work permits. Until today, permits were given only to those over the age of 28. Two hundred Palestinians also were given one-day permits to transfer civil administration vehicles to Israel for maintenance, the army said.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai and Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin-Shahak approved the measures, but stipulated that all eligible workers needed to have security passes.

Arieh O'Sullivan

Flag again flying over Rachel's Tomb

The Religious Affairs Ministry yesterday replaced the Israeli flag over Rachel's Tomb. According to Ministry spokesman Shimon Malka, the flag had been removed from the tomb itself, due to work on the roof, and transferred to the army post across the street. Later, he said, the army had removed that flag at the request of the government, which feared it would be a cause of contention. Yesterday, Malka added, he went to the tomb at Deputy Religious Affairs Minister Yigal Bibi's request and not only replaced the flag on the roof, but also put another flag at the tomb's entrance.

Haim Shapiro

PA sentences three to death for murder

The Palestinian Authority special security court sentenced two police officers and a civilian to death yesterday for gunning down a Preventive Security Service agent outside his Gaza home. The court also sentenced seven others to prison terms for complicity in the murder. All 10 are from the same family, including Major Atif Baizid, a member of PA Chairman Yasser Arafat's personal security guard.

Khair el-Din, Faris and Mohammed Baizid ambushed Ismail Hassouna outside his house in Deir-el-Balah on Tuesday. The Baizid family believed that during the intifada Hassouna, a Fatah Hawk, murdered a member of the family for allegedly collaborating with Israel.

Though several Gazans have been sentenced to death for offenses ranging from murder to rape none of the sentences has been carried out.

Jon Immanuel

Labor to field "independent" for Histadrut

The Labor Party will consider letting its candidate for Histadrut chairman in the next Histadrut elections head an independent list for the first time in its history, it was decided at the party's executive meeting yesterday.

Labor secretary-general Nissim Zvili yesterday proposed that Histadrut Chairman MK Amir Peretz be nominated as Labor's candidate for the Histadrut chairmanship, even though Peretz is part of a separate faction, New Life, in the Histadrut.

Peretz is demanding to be Labor's candidate in the Histadrut elections without having to be elected via party primaries.

Michal Yudelman

Army stops settlers building near Kedumim

Settlers from Kedumim who began illegal construction near their settlement were turned back by the IDF yesterday, a day after they scuffled with Palestinians at the site.

The settlers had, for the second day, brought bulldozers to the hilltop, situated between their community and the neighboring Palestinian village of Kafir Kaddum.

On Wednesday, Palestinians threw stones at the settlers, who responded by firing in the air. Soldiers intervened and yesterday troops were stationed on the hilltop to keep either side from taking the hill.

AP

Kinneret water level to be low this summer

The water level in Lake Kinneret appears destined to be lower than normal this summer, unless there are heavy downpours during what remains of the winter.

Recent precipitation has brought the amount of rainfall in the northern and central regions almost up to the regular winter average, but the long, dry spell earlier this winter has meant that most of the rain has soaked into the ground, instead of running off into the Jordan River and the streams that flow into the Kinneret.

Mekorot officials reported yesterday that the level of water in the lake has risen by only 64 centimeters so far this winter. It is still 2.6 meters from its maximum mark and more than 1.2 meters below the level it reached at the end of last winter.

David Rudge

Jews, Christians donate to fight prejudice

Twenty-two Christians and six Jews have made a large donation to the Vatican's Commission for Religious Relations with Jews in Education, which supports programs to fight theological stereotypes and prejudice.

The group gave an equal amount to the Netanya Foundation to fund programs promoting Arab-Jewish relations.

Members of the group met with Pope John Paul II yesterday at the Vatican.

Lisa Palmieri-Billig

B'tselem: Prosecute Hizme shooters

B'tselem, the human rights organization, has called for the prosecution of undercover officers who shot a Hizme man in the leg during a clash there last week. The man, Mohammed al-Hilu, 57, died. B'tselem said there was evidence he died from blows to the head by soldiers and not from the bullet. The IDF insists that he was shot below the knee when he was about to hurl a rock at an IDF officer and that his death was probably the result of a heart attack. The family buried him without an autopsy.

Jon Immanuel

Most banks expected to be open today

By GALIT LIPKIS BECK

Bank workers are expected to cancel their plans to strike today despite the lack of any substantial progress made towards an agreement on the transition to a five-day work week.

The Bank Hapolim and Bank Leumi workers committees have instructed employees to work today, even though no agreement has been reached on the issue with management. It was not clear last night whether the other banks will strike.

The National Labor Court conducted a hearing on the issue late last night.

Before the meeting, Histadrut

bank workers division head Zion Shema said the workers object to the guidelines set by Antitrust Commissioner David Tadmor and Supervisor of Banks Ze'ev Abeles regarding the transition to a shorter week.

"At this stage, it is unclear whether the strike will go ahead or not," Shema said.

"The workers are not likely to agree to the proposal to open banks six days a week but let workers work the equivalent of a five-day week," he said.

A proposal of this kind would require employees to work half days or split days from Sunday through Thursday and a full morning on Friday.



Planting for the future

Gabriel Escarrer (right), president of Spain's Sol Melia hotel chain, speaks with his host, tour director Oni Amiel, and JNF official Eliran Kesar at a tree-planting ceremony at the Amiel Forest near Jerusalem yesterday. Sol Melia, Spain's largest hotel chain, wants to begin operating here.

(See Malcolin)

Ministry rejects Weinroth brutality claim

By BAT SHEVA TSUR

BAR-ON

The Justice Ministry yesterday refuted a claim by the prime minister's private lawyer, Ya'acov Weinroth, that his secretary was "brutally" interrogated by police investigating the leak of a protocol from the cabinet meeting at which Roni Bar-On was appointed attorney-general.

Weinroth said that he would consider taking action against the police for their "brutal behavior" in their interrogation of his secretary, Kammy Cohen, on

Wednesday night.

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu hired Weinroth last month after he was questioned under caution over the Bar-On affair. Police asked Cohen to give evidence in connection with the leak of the protocol of the cabinet meeting to *Globes* newspaper.

Weinroth told Israel Radio yesterday that Cohen works as his secretary "from morning to night" and police claims that they could not track her down were spurious.

On Wednesday night, Weinroth said, unidentified people knocked on her door and she was afraid to open it. She phoned Weinroth, who in turn called the Dizengoff police station, the attorney general and state attorney, discovering eventually that these were police investigators. At that point, he

said, Cohen went with them and gave evidence.

All concerned, Weinroth said, knew that no one from his office had leaked the protocol. But the Justice Ministry had a different version.

"Because of the nature of the investigation, it was not possible to approach the secretary of the office; nor was it necessary to speak to advocate Weinroth whose evidence is not required at this stage," the ministry said in a statement.

"For more than an hour and a half, [Cohen] refused to open the door to her apartment, despite the fact that the team, which included two women, offered to show her their IDs."

The ministry expressed its "surprise that the investigation has met with such a stormy reaction for no substantive reason."

Transport Minister questioned

By Jerusalem Post Staff

Transport Minister Yitzhak Levy of the National Religious Party was questioned in his office yesterday by police investigating the Bar-On Affair.

Levy was asked why he abstained in the cabinet vote on the appointment of Roni Bar-On as attorney-general and if he had any information that the appointment was part of a deal with Shas.

Investigators from the police and State Attorney's Office focused their efforts this week on reviewing evidence to determine if there are grounds for indicting officials involved in the alleged deal. At this stage, sources said, there is not enough evidence to recommend any official be charged.

Next week, investigators plan to question some people again, including Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi and Prime Minister's Office Director-General Avigdor Lieberman.

Hoter-Yishai again attacks Aharon Barak

By BAT SHEVA TSUR

Israel Bar Association chairman Dror Hoter-Yishai yesterday launched a fresh attack on Supreme Court President Aharon Barak, saying that Barak delays the handing down of verdicts "for years."

"The bar association's central committee has decided that the approach of the Supreme Court and its president, who consider that every matter should come under their purview, has led to delays in hearing appeals, to transferring cases to the end of the list and to putting off verdicts for years. This approach of intervening in matters that should not be under the purview of the court or its president, has divided the legal community and is controversial in itself," Hoter-Yishai said in a statement.

Turning to the Bar-On

affair, Hoter-Yishai added: "The central committee has expressed reservations about the court president's over-intervention in appointments in the executive branch of government. This intervention recently led to the need to give evidence to the police."

Sources close to Barak recently said that he had been asked by the police why he had opposed the appointment of Roni Bar-On as attorney-general when approached on the matter by Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi.

In his statement yesterday, Hoter-Yishai said he saw it as "a public duty to express my views, and those of the majority who chose me for a second term of office" as bar association chairman.

On Wednesday, the heads of the bar association's district offices published a statement condemning Hoter-Yishai's attacks on Barak.

Haifa Chemicals talks continue

By DAVID RUDGE

Last-ditch negotiations are to be held today in an effort to reach an agreement to resolve the labor dispute that has closed the giant Haifa Chemicals bayside factory for nearly five months.

Histadrut chairman Amir Peretz is due to meet representatives of the company's owner, Arye Genger, in a bid to iron out remaining problems, in a draft agreement.

Sources close to the Histadrut negotiating team were optimistic last night that the issues in question can be resolved and the factory, which currently employs 500 people, will reopen after one of the

longest labor disputes in the country's history.

The go-ahead for the meeting followed hours of talks last night between Peretz and Histadrut officials and members of the Haifa Chemicals workers committee, which had rejected the draft agreement.

Under the terms of the provisional accord, 60 of the workers are to take voluntary retirement, another 55 will be fired with preferential redundancy terms and 20 would move onto personal contracts.

The remainder of the workers would be expected to take cuts in welfare and social benefits that would reduce their overall salaries by as much as 17 percent.

Management has insisted on the cutbacks, in return for a collective labor agreement, in order to reduce the firm's overhead expenses and enable it to compete profitably on overseas markets.

The workers committee has insisted on several amendments to the draft accord, which Peretz is to put before the owner's representatives today.

Workers committee chairman David Raviv apologized to Peretz last night for remarks he made about the Histadrut during a mass meeting of the workers outside the factory gates on Wednesday, during which Raviv tore up the draft accord and described it as a sell-out.

Betar to suffer in silence

By OFI LEWIS

The punishment meted out on league leaders Betar Jerusalem by the IFA after crowd trouble at Teddy Stadium last month in the match with Hapoel Beersheba is unlikely to trouble the players as they take on Zefirum Holon tomorrow afternoon.

Betar have been ordered to play at Teddy Stadium behind closed doors, which is expected to cost the Jerusalemites gate-takings of nearly NIS 500,000. The surrealistic surroundings are sure to have some effect on all the players, but the difference in quality between the two sides is still one which would appear to favor Betar very heavily.

Lowly Holon - they lie in 14th place in the standings, just one point above the danger zone - have not won in their

Rosso, will certainly trouble Petah Tikva's back line as they create moves which will endanger Shai Hess's goal.

Petah Tikva will look to the talents of Gabor Marton as the key man at the back, the ball skills of Manor Hassan and Yaniv Ofri and the strike power of Motti Kakkon for a positive result.

Other fixtures see the Haifa derby relegated to a game of only passing interest, particularly after Maccabi's poor showing of late, and Maccabi Tel Aviv's home clash with Bnei Yehuda gets less than its fair share of coverage as neither side is in for anything much this season.

Maccabi will, perhaps, try to regain some lost pride after the Hatkva Quarter side soundly beat them in the Toto Cup semi-final, held last month.

At the bottom, Hapoel Beit She'an host Hapoel Tel Aviv and Maccabi Herzliya are at home to Hapoel Taiba.

This weekend's National League fixtures (all matches kick off tomorrow at 15:00 unless stated): Betar Jerusalem vs. Zefirum Holon, Teddy Stadium 16:30; Maccabi Tel Aviv vs. Bnei Yehuda, National Stadium RG 16:00; Maccabi Herzliya vs. Hapoel Taiba, Herzliya; Hapoel Beersheba vs. Hapoel Petah Tikva, Beersheba; Hapoel Haifa vs. Maccabi Haifa, Kiryat Eliezer, 15:30; Maccabi Petah Tikva vs. Hapoel Kfar Sava, Petah Tikva; Hapoel Beit She'an vs. Hapoel Tel Aviv, Beit She'an today 14:30; Ironi Rishon LeZion vs. Hapoel Jerusalem, Rishon.

Man Utd headed one way, Newcastle in another

LONDON (AP) - While Manchester United flirt with making history, Newcastle are struggling to make it through the season.

The Magpies, out-classed in a 1-0 home loss earlier in the week in a UEFA Cup first-leg quarterfinal against Monaco, played the match without their top two offensive players - Alan Shearer and Les Ferdinand, both out with injuries.

Colombian Faustino Asprilla also missed the match under suspension.

Now it looks like Frenchman David Ginola - who has been benched since Kenny Dalglish took over at Newcastle in January following Kevin Keegan's surprise resignation - wants to leave.

Ginola's manager Jean Francois Larios has had talks with the French club Marseille, suggesting Ginola may be about to return to his native southern France.

4-0 humbling Wednesday of Portugal's FC Porto in the first-leg quarterfinals of the Champions Cup, are the English team of the year.

But the surprise team might be newly-promoted Leicester, who moved into ninth place in the Premier League after a 1-0 win Wednesday over Aston Villa. It was Leicester's third straight win in the league.

"After the first half (of the season), the only way we'd get into Europe was on the hovercraft," said outspoken manager Martin O'Neill. "But we did better in the second half, didn't we."

Leicester, who are led by American goalkeeper Casey Keller, are ninth with 36 points - 21 fewer than Manchester United. But Leicester aren't that far behind the bottom club in the top six - Sheffield Wednesday with 45 points.

"Don't tell my players anything about Europe," O'Neill joked. "I don't want them getting over-excited." Leeds, playing better since former Arsenal manager George Graham took over at mid-season, may lose Ghana striker Tony Yeboah who is reportedly seeking a transfer.

"That is news to me," Graham said.

Yeboah told the *Daily Star* he's not welcome at Leeds.

"Graham only allows me to play because it is what the fans want," he said. "It is not because it is what he wants to do."

In Scotland, Rangers say they are ready to open contract talks with England international midfielder Paul Gascoigne, who is also being sought by Sunderland of the Premier League.

"We'll sit down very shortly with Paul to discuss his contract," said vice-chairman Donald Findlay, who was downplaying talk of a five-year agreement.

"Five years is perhaps off beam, but we'd certainly like Paul to stay with Rangers if that's what he wants to do," Findlay added.

Newcastle can't afford any slips if they want to land a place next season in Europe. The fourth-place Magpies have 48 points and trail league-leading Manchester United by nine. Liverpool are second with 53 points followed by Arsenal with 51. Aston Villa are fifth with 46 followed by Sheffield Wednesday (45) and Wimbledon (44).

English soccer this weekend is a hodge-podge of league and FA Cup quarterfinals. In the FA Cup, it's Derby-Middlesbrough tomorrow with three more on Sunday - Chesterfield-Wrexham, Portsmouth-Chelsea, and Sheffield Wednesday-Wimbledon.

In tomorrow's Premier League games: Arsenal-Nottingham Forest, Coventry-Leicester, Leeds-Everton, and Sunderland-Manchester United. On Monday, Newcastle play at Liverpool.

In the first division tomorrow, league-leading Bolton are home to Swindon.

Manchester United, with their

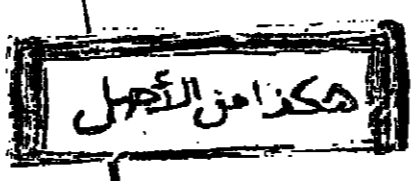
Bowe wants another go

NEW YORK (AP) - Two weeks after his aborted stint as a Marine recruit, former heavyweight champion Riddick Bowe said he wants another chance.

"All I think about is becoming a Marine," Bowe told the *Daily News*. "I really would like to be a Marine and make the Marine Corps proud. If they gave me another opportunity, I know I can do it."

"It's what's in my heart. Next time, if they give me another chance, I'll know what to expect." Gunnery Sgt. Hugh Hawthorne of the Marine Recruiting Command told the newspaper that it was "virtually impossible" that the 29-year-old fighter would be given a second opportunity.

Bowe left the Parris Island, SC, base February 20 after just 10 days of camp, saying he couldn't stand the "complete loss of control" over his life. He was granted a general discharge.



'Crime not an issue in Cape Town bid'

LAUSANNE, Switzerland (Reuter) — Cape Town bidders said yesterday that crime would not be an issue when they tried to persuade Olympic chiefs to keep the city in the race to host the 2004 Summer Games.

The International Olympic Committee brought up the issues of crime and political stability in South Africa when a Cape Town delegation was among 11 cities presenting their bids to the body at a meeting here, the delegation said.

The IOC will draw up a shortlist of four or five cities today. Cape Town is believed to have a very good chance of being one of the final candidates who will go into a vote at the IOC's session in September to decide the venue.

But the city needed to stress that South Africa was winning the fight against crime and that the country would be stable when President Nelson Mandela leaves office in 1999.

"In 1994 we inherited an unacceptable high level of crime and there was a high level of corruption in the police," South African Speaker of the House Frene Ginwala said. "We have arrested and charged more police in this time than in the 40 years before that."

The bid's executive officer Chris Ball added: "You have to get crime in Cape Town into perspective. Crime at the Olympic Games will not be an issue." Cape Town has a battle on its hands to match the bids of favorites Rome, Athens, Buenos Aires and

Stockholm who are highly regarded in terms of their facilities and organization.

But the city has a very strong political case because it can bring the Games to Africa for the first time. It would certainly be a surprise if the IOC decided against including the South African city in its shortlist.

Ginwala said Cape Town told the IOC there would be continuity in the country despite the fact that Mandela would be handing over his control of the African National Congress (ANC) later this year and would not be standing in the 1999 election.

"When any society has men and women of great achievement people ask these questions," she said. "The issue is being addressed... Collective decisions are made in South Africa." Cape Town stressed it would be representing a whole continent. But the delegation, which included Sports Minister Steve Tshwete, was quick to point out that it was not just in Lausanne to plead a political case.

"We have not just come for a political award," Ginwala said.

"Technically we are on a par with the other bids." The outsiders in the race — Istanbul, Lille, Rio de Janeiro, San Juan, Seville and St Petersburg — were also trying to impress the IOC's selection group of their qualities on Thursday, together with the favorites.

Rio has brought Pele to Switzerland to back its bid but the delegation is likely to leave Lausanne disappointed.

Maccabi falls to Efes Pilsen

Game 2 in best-of-3 series Tuesday at Yad Eliyahu

By BRIAN FREEMAN

Efes Pilsen showed why it is one of the strongest basketball teams in Europe this season, especially on its home court, with a convincing 76-67 victory over Maccabi Tel Aviv in Game 1 of their Final 16 series last night.

If Maccabi does not beat Efes on Tuesday night at Yad Eliyahu and then again next Thursday back in Istanbul, the European season will end for the blue-and-yellow.

Four Efes players scored in double figures as the club used its patented teamwork and a 25-27 night from the free-throw line to keep the Israelis at bay, despite no field goals and only three points in the second half from its star point guard Peter Naumoski.

Maccabi held an early advantage at 12-9 but quickly fell behind and was never able to even the score

after Nadav Henefeld put in one of his three field goals midway through the first period to tie the game at 21-21.

Efes then shifted its offense into high gear before its continuously cheering fans and went on a 13-2 run that was capped by the second of three three-pointers on the night for Ufik Sarcia, who led all scorers with 20 points.

Tel Aviv fell behind by as many as 15 points with only a few minutes remaining in the first half when Boriko Radovic came off the bench to breathe new life into Maccabi's chances by nailing two consecutive three-pointers of his own to cut the halftime margin to 43-36.

But the Turks served notice immediately out of the locker room that they did not intend to lose a European game at home for the first time all season, building back up the advantage within the

first five minutes to 55-41.

However, to its credit, Maccabi never threw in the towel. Several times the club cut the margin to within seven points — and once, with six minutes left on the clock to within four at 65-61 — but each time the Turks bounced back.

What really did in the Israelis was 16 second-half points on free throws for the Turks, who made 23 straight from the charity stripe until finally missing with only 2:30 left in the game.

When Maccabi, which only had 11 free-throw attempts all night, cut the lead to four points, it was five straight Efes foul shots which built back up the margin.

To make matters worse, Randy White — who led Maccabi's comeback attempt with 11 second-half points — fouled out during that streak.

Also frustrating for Maccabi

was that it was outbounced by a team which came into the contest as the Euro League club with the worst disadvantage on the boards.

Efes was regularly getting second, and at a few particularly crucial moments, third chances to score.

Maccabi was also done in by the inability of either Doron Sheffer (four points) or Oded Katash (one point) to hit a clutch shot.

For Maccabi, Buck Johnson had a consistent game and led the team with 18 points, while White had 15 and Radovic 11. Henefeld chipped in 7, Brad Leaf 6, Sheffer 4, Constantin Popa 2 and Katash 1.

Sarcia, who was 5-5 from the free-throw line, paced Efes with 20 points, while Vassilij Karasev (9-9 from the line) had 15. Naumoski 14 and Tamer Oygac 10. Derrick Alston chipped in 9 points and Mirsad Turkcan 8.

Mavericks, Spurs hit record lows

NEW YORK (AP) — While most of the NBA sets its sights on playoff seedings and other matters of importance, the San Antonio Spurs and Dallas Mavericks keep floundering and flopping to new depths.

Both teams reached new lows Wednesday night, the Spurs in a 111-69 loss at Chicago and the Mavs in a 96-65 defeat at Utah. The point totals were franchise-lows for both teams.

Where were the stars? Dennis Rodman was sitting out a one-game NBA suspension for hitting Milwaukee's Joe Wolf in the groin two nights earlier, David Robinson, Dominique Wilkins and Sean Elliott were injured and Michael Jordan played less than half the game.

"We knew we were going to have trouble scoring," San Antonio coach Gregg Popovich said. "They obviously are the best team on the planet... and we just don't have enough players." The defending champions didn't need much from Jordan, who played only 23 minutes and scored just 16 points, about half his league-leading average.

The Bulls played as poorly as the Spurs for the first 17 minutes and led only 30-28. But Dickey Simpkins, one of Rodman's replacements, scored seven points as Chicago finished the first half with an 18-5 run to go up 48-33. Simpkins capped the surge with a



EASY DOES IT — Bulls' Michael Jordan drives in for two through Spurs defense. Chicago won in a walkover 111-69.

buzzer-beating 3-pointer.

Chicago then outscored San Antonio 30-11 to start the third quarter.

"This game was one of those you see that makes you wonder if we may have actually set the game back," Bulls coach Phil Jackson said. "Sometimes you play to the level of your competition."

Jazz 96, Mavericks 65

Dallas managed only 10 points in the third quarter and 14 in the fourth, also producing the lowest point total ever by a Utah opponent.

"It was a rough shooting night for us," said Dallas coach Jim Cleamons, whose team played five games in seven nights. "Being short-handed for most of this stretch has hurt us. We're just a tired basketball team."

After shooting 47.4 percent (18-for-38) in the first half, the Mavericks were just 6-of-33 (18.1

percent) in the second half.

The Jazz, meanwhile, exceeded the 50 percent mark (53.9 percent) for the 16th time in 22 games. Karl Malone hit 10 of 13 field-goal attempts and scored 20 points, and Jeff Hornacek was 7-of-10 for 17 points.

Dallas' previous low was 66 points in a 12-point loss to Orlando on January 15.

Knicks 100, Raptors 94

Patrick Ewing scored season-high 36 points, including 11 straight for visiting New York in the final quarter, to lead the Knicks to their fifth straight win and 13th in 15 games.

The victory improved the Knicks' record to 45-16 and moved them into a virtual first-place tie in the Atlantic Division with the Miami Heat, which was idle Wednesday. The Heat are 44-15.

Cavaliers 85, Pacers 78

Danny Ferry scored 19 points,

including two late 3-pointers, and host Cleveland ended Indiana's four-game winning streak and stopped a two-game slide of its own.

Pistons 92, Timberwolves 88

Detroit started a five-game road trip by denying Minnesota its franchise-record 30th victory.

The Pistons got 21 points from Lindsey Hunter and some clutch shooting late in the fourth quarter by Joe Dumars.

Kevin Garnett had 22 points and eight rebounds for the Wolves.

Rockets 90, Warriors 85

Haksem Olajuwon scored 13 of his 31 points in the fourth period for visiting Houston, which again played without Charles Barkley and Clyde Drexler.

Kevin Willis added 17 points and 10 rebounds and Othella Harrington had nine points for the Rockets, who completed a sweep of the four-game season series.

Obziler, Cahana square off in tennis final

By HEATHER CHAIT

Trippi Obziler, in her quest for her second title in two weeks, will play Nataly Cahana in the semifinal of the \$10,000 women's tournament in Tel Aviv today.

Twenty-three-year-old Obziler, who won her first international event last week in Jaffa, and Cahana are both unseeded.

Yesterday, Obziler beat Nelly Barkan 6-4, 6-1 and Cahana beat Nora Kovacs from Hungary 6-2, 6-2. Kovacs was Obziler's victim in the final in Jaffa.

The other semifinal will also star no seeds as Swiss Miroslava Vavrinec meets Czech qualifier Milena Nekvapilova.

In the Masters event of the Club Hotel Eilat satellite, also in Tel Aviv, top seed Andrew Ilie from Austria is seeking his third title of the circuit.

The best Nir Welgreen 6-3, 7-5 yesterday, to reach today's semifinal where he will play Dmitri Poliakov from the Ukraine who squeezed through against Lior Mor 6-7(5/7), 6-4, 6-3.

The other semifinal will be between Frenchmen Jean Francois Bachelot and Julien Varlet, seeded second and fifth respectively. Yesterday Bachelot beat Noam Behr 4-6, 6-3, 7-5; and Varlet beat Andres Zingman from Argentina, 4-6, 6-3, 7-6.

The men's doubles title went to Poliakov and Uzbekistan's Dmitri Tomashevich who beat Oren Motavassel and Claude N'Goran from the Ivory Coast 7-5, 6-4.

Athletes move to cut compulsory doping bans

LAUSANNE (Reuter) — International athletics chiefs are to push for a cut in compulsory doping bans from four to two years because the rules are close to collapse and have already been abandoned in Germany because of legal problems.

Medical chief Arne Ljungqvist said yesterday the IAAF would try to persuade its congress to make the changes to its rules at a meeting before the world championships in Athens in August.

SPORTS

in brief

Soccer stars face corruption re-trial

LONDON (AP) — Former soccer stars Bruce Grobbelaar, John Fashanu and Hans Segers along with London-based Malaysian businessman Heng Sun Lim are to be retried on corruption charges related to fixing soccer matches.

The Crown Prosecution Service said yesterday it would press ahead with proceedings against the four. No date was set for the new trial.

The announcement comes just two days after their first trial ended with the jury failing to reach a verdict.

The first trial lasted seven weeks at Winchester Crown Court over allegations of conspiring to give and accept corrupt payments to influence or attempt to influence the outcome of football matches.

Desmond Howard leaves Pack for Raiders

ALAMEDA, Ca. (AP) — Desmond Howard, who salvaged a fading career with an electrifying kickoff return in the Super Bowl, parlayed his comeback into a new job — with the Oakland Raiders.

Howard, who left the Green Bay Packers to sign a four-year, \$6 million contract, becomes the second straight Super Bowl MVP to sign with the Raiders. Larry Brown joined them after making two interceptions for Dallas in the 1996 title game.

In Green Bay's 35-21 Super Bowl victory over New England in January, Howard set a record with 10 kick returns for 244 yards, including a 99-yarder for a touchdown that sealed the Packers' win.

Manning passes on NFL's riches

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — In an era when athletes are often perceived as money-grabbers, Peyton Manning decided to stay put and play for free.

Actually, he exacted a small price to play quarterback for Tennessee and coach Phillip Fulmer for another year.

"All coach Fulmer promised me next year were books, tuition, food and I get to call one play a game and drive his Lexus around the block," Manning said wryly.

Manning's decision to play his senior season will likely cost him becoming the No. 1 pick in the April 19 NFL draft.

"Twenty-five, \$30 million. I'm human. Believe me, I looked at the money," Peyton Manning said. "I'm hoping the money's there next year, too, the good Lord willing I stay healthy."

Manning holds Tennessee records for career passing yardage (7,382), touchdowns (53), completions (576), attempts (904), completion percentage (63.7) and numerous single-season marks.

Costa Ricans sign for Derby

SAN JOSE (Reuter) — Costa Rican internationals Paulo Cesar Winchope and Mauricio Sols have signed for Premier League side Derby County.

Striker Winchope and midfielder Sols both signed three-year contracts and expect to be available on March 22.

Yankees sign Rivera, Pettitte; Jeter holds out

TAMPA. (AP) — Pitchers Andy Pettitte and Mariano Rivera, keys to the New York Yankees' championship run last season, signed one-year contracts with the team Wednesday.

American League Rookie of the Year Derek Jeter had his contract renewed at a figure to be determined after the shortstop rejected an offer of \$450,000. Pettitte, 21-8 with a 3.87 ERA in 1996, signed for \$600,000. The 24-year-old left-hander should be one of the mainstays of the Yankees staff.

Rivera is expected to become the closer in the bullpen after John Wetteland left for Texas as a free agent. He signed a deal worth \$550,000. Rivera, 27, was the Yankees' setup man a year ago, fanning 130 in 107 1/3 innings as he went 8-3 with a 2.09 ERA.

Jeter hit .314 with 10 homers, 78 RBIs and scored 104 runs.

Munich, city of Manchester United tragedy, beckons

MANCHESTER (Reuter) — Manchester United's dream of becoming European champions could become a reality in Munich on May 28, the city which witnessed the greatest tragedy in the club's history.

On February 6, 1958 the plane carrying the United party back from a European Cup match in Belgrade, crashed on takeoff after refueling in Munich and 23 people were killed — including eight members of the Busby Babes, as Matt Busby's young talented side were known.

Now, following United's overwhelming 4-0 victory against Porto in the first leg of their European Cup quarterfinal on Wednesday night, United have been installed as second favorites behind Juventus to reach this year's final, which is being staged in Munich.

United have not reached the final since they won the European Cup in 1968 and they have never played a match in Munich.

But if they do reach the final and win it, the awful connotations of the words "Manchester United and Munich" will take on a new, different meaning. Rather than diminish the memory of the men who lost their lives there 39 years ago, it would serve as a tribute to them.

On the evidence produced at a pulsating,

vibrant Old Trafford on Wednesday, it seems highly improbable that Porto can stop United in two weeks time advancing one step nearer to southern Germany.

If United do reach the last four as expected they will meet the winner of the Borussia Dortmund-Auxerre quarterfinal and it is hard to see either living with United if they can reproduce the kind of football they served up to demolish Porto.

United manager Alex Ferguson was full of high praise for the way his side played, and singled out Ryan Giggs for his outstanding display in midfield.

That, allied to Eric Cantona's inspirational runs and passing, and the defensive barrier thrown across the back by Gary Pallister and David May, was the cornerstone of United's success.

Giggs was among the scorers, who also included May, Cantona and Andy Cole, and Ferguson said afterwards: "Midfield has always suited Ryan. He showed a maturity and passing awareness that emphasizes that in two years time he will be a truly wonderful player."

"We have always said he had to develop and now he is developing into an outstanding talent. He has got something you can't put into people — an electricity and a balance on the ball. Porto simply couldn't live

with that."

Apart from one chance in the opening minute and a spell of 15 minutes at the start of the game where the threatened, Porto — who won five of their six Champions League matches including an away victory at AC Milan — produced nothing.

Coach Antonio Oliveira opened with a 4-5-1 formation which he changed soon after United went ahead through May in the 22nd minute.

He brought on the tall Brazilian Jardel, the joint-leading scorer in the Champions League, but Jardel, who had threatened to "turn Old Trafford to ice" before the match was himself frozen out of the picture and hardly made a contribution.

Instead it was United who were rampant, playing with a passion, commitment and self-belief that was missing in the autumn when they won three and lost three of their Champions League matches.

Porto's major mistake was in allowing United to take control of the game with a goal in the opening half hour. Once May had forced the ball over the line from close range, Porto were always on the back foot, and were reeling when Cantona made it 2-0 following a mistake by Brazilian defender Aloisio after 34 minutes.

The Portuguese were not helped by their

21-year-old goalkeeper Hilario. It might take him the rest of his career to recover from the mistakes which he made in allowing the first two goals — and he will probably have recurring nightmares over Giggs' 61st-minute strike that went in by his near post.

He also came out too quickly and lost control of the situation when Cole quickly swept home the fourth 10 minutes from time.

Before the match, United were concerned that their midfielder influence would be diminished by the absence of Roy Keane, out with an ankle injury. But Giggs stepped into the gap and United played so brilliantly they hardly missed him.

Ferguson would have settled for a 1-0 win before the match.

"To win 4-0 was a result we didn't expect, its beyond my wildest dreams, and probably everybody else's," he said.

Pat Crerand, who played in the 1968 European Cup winning team, said on his local radio show that he believed that United could now go on to win an English League and European Cup double.

It's a dream that could yet come true. That it could come true in the city that witnessed United's darkest hour will give United even more reason to achieve it.

NATIONAL HOCKEY LEAGUE

EASTERN CONFERENCE					WESTERN CONFERENCE								
Atlantic Division					Central Division								
W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA		
Philadelphia	18	10	84	217	167	Dallas	39	23	4	82	200	161	
Pittsburgh	18	12	80	177	148	Detroit	31	19	14	78	203	149	
New Jersey	24	18	80	177	148	St. Louis	28	30	8	64	194	202	
Washington	21	15	73	175	152	Phoenix	29	32	4	62	184	201	
NY Islanders	27	9	67	209	183	Chicago	26	30	10	82	172	185	
Tampa Bay	27	9	67	178	194	Toronto	25	37	3	53	192	227	
Washington	32	7	57	180	179	Pacific Division							
NY Islanders	32	7	57	178	194	Colorado	41	16	8	90	252	155	
Philadelphia	32	7	57	178	194	Vancouver	30	29	7	67	207	199	
Pittsburgh	34	20	10	78	188	Edmonton	30	29	7	67	188	190	
Pittsburgh	31	28	5	67	223	212	Anheim	27	33	7	61	177	222
Hartford	25	30	9	68	180	230	Calgary	27	33	7	61	177	222
Montreal	24	31	11	63	226	236	Vancouver	28	34	3	59	203	222
Chicago	21	35	15	55	170	191	Los Angeles	24	34	3	58	178	214
Boston	21	34	15	51	186	228	San Jose	22	35	7	51	168	214

SCOREBOARD

CUP WINNERS' CUP — Last night's quarterfinal results: Benfica 0, Fiorentina 2; Paris St. Germain 0, AEK Athens 0; Brann Bergen 1, Liverpool 1; Borussia Dortmund 2, Atletico Madrid 0.

NEWS — Wednesday's results: Hartford 3, Calgary 0; Buffalo 4, Pittsburgh 2; Colorado 7, Montreal 3; New Jersey 3, Philadelphia 1; Phoenix 3, Florida 2; Detroit 7, Toronto 3; Dallas 3, St. Louis 2; Chicago 1, Vancouver 1; Anaheim 4, Ottawa 1.

Source: Sports Editors

NEWS

in brief

Beduin tribe petitions court over housing

Forty-two families of the Jahalin Beduin tribe petitioned the High Court of Justice yesterday against their eviction from their homes near Ma'aleh Adumim to a hilltop which they say lacks any amenities. The families said the UNRWA tents in which they were living had been blown down by storms and they asked the court, via advocate Lynda Brayer, to order the government to build them a housing project in place of what was termed "the latest Palestinian refugee camp."

Jerusalem Post Staff

Woman axed by husband improving

Ruti Fingel, 44, of Ramle, whose husband attacked her with an ax on Wednesday night, was reported to be improving at Tzrifin's Assaf Harofeh Hospital last night.

The husband, Nuriel Fingel, attacked his wife at her mother's home, immediately after she found her mother dead there. Ruti was saved by a neighbor who heard her screams and pulled her out of her husband's clutches to safety. She had been wounded in the eye and head. The husband fled the scene, and he had not been located as of last night. The husband is not suspected of killing the mother, who, tests showed, died a natural death.

Trim

Ministry refuses to raise rank of dead officer

Haifa police are furious that the Internal Security Ministry has refused to raise the rank of Ch.-Supt. Effi Keinan, who died Wednesday of injuries sustained while he and other policemen were trying to quell rioting in Jisr e-Zarka village near Hadera on Sunday night. Keinan's colleagues had called for his rank to be raised, as is often done for soldiers killed in action. The ministry said it investigated the option, but that this case did not meet the necessary criteria. Keinan was buried in the police section of the Haifa Military Cemetery yesterday.

Trim



Groundbreaking at the Rabin Center

Dalia Rabin Pelosoff, daughter of the late prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, lays the cornerstone yesterday for the planned Rabin Center for Israel Studies in Tel Aviv. (Assaf Shilo/Israel Sun)

Shas bill takes aim at Women of the Wall

By HAIM SHAPIRO

Only a day after the Women of the Wall thought they had won a battle in their struggle to hold group prayers at the Western Wall, a bill was passed in preliminary reading that would change the status of the Western Wall Plaza from a national to a religious site.

The bill, submitted by Shas MKs, would define the Western Wall Plaza as a synagogue, with the rabbi of the Wall in charge. It would be illegal to go with one's head uncovered, wear clothing considered immodest, or hold any gathering of a public nature not authorized in advance, within the area encompassing the entire plaza, from the security posts.

Religious Affairs Ministry spokesman Shimon Malka yesterday made clear that those who drafted the legislation had the Women of the Wall in mind. "The meaning of the law is that people like the Women of the Wall, who only want to make trouble, wouldn't be able to carry on with their nastiness," Malka said.

On Tuesday, the High Court of Justice had given the Religious Affairs Ministry 60 days to

show why it should not allow the group to pray aloud at the Western Wall, read from a Torah scroll, and wear prayer shawls, which are usually worn by men. The group has been trying to hold such services since 1989, but its efforts have been thwarted by the authorities and have been met with violence by hard-line worshippers.

For the past three years, an interministerial committee, set up following a previous High Court ruling, has sought to find a solution for the group, but it has only come up with suggestions that the women pray at sites away from the Western Wall Plaza, options which the group has rejected.

According to Prof. Frances Rada, a spokesman for the

group, most of the Women of the Wall are Orthodox, and their desire to wear prayer shawls and to read from the Torah is not contrary to Halacha. The effort to silence women at the Wall, she said, dramatically symbolizes the removal of women from public life.

Einat Ramon, spokesperson for the Masorti (Conservative) movement here, said yesterday that Shas has succeeded in quietly introducing a number of bills, right under the noses of some naive secular MKs, who not only did not check what the bills were about, but sometimes even voted for them.

She added that this bill was characteristic of Shas's effort to turn the country into a state run by Halacha.

WEATHER

Colen	2-7
Haifa	10-18
Tiberias	10-17
Ahlat	9-16
Samarita	6-9
Tel Aviv	10-16
Jerusalem	5-8
Beer Sheva	8-16
Dead Sea	14-21
Eilat	11-19

Forecast: Local rain in center and south of country. Shabbat: Clear, unseasonably cold.

AROUND THE WORLD

City	Low	High	Weather
Amsterdam	08	08	cloudy
Berlin	15	20	clear
Buenos Aires	15	20	clear
Chicago	05	23	partly cloudy
Copenhagen	04	20	cloudy
Frankfurt	05	14	rain
Geneva	04	20	cloudy
Hong Kong	18	24	clear
Jakarta	15	23	rain
London	05	11	clear
Los Angeles	12	22	clear
Moscow	06	22	cloudy
Montreal	04	20	cloudy
New York	04	20	cloudy
Paris	09	18	clear
Rome	09	18	clear
Stockholm	07	14	cloudy
Sydney	18	21	clear
Tokyo	07	18	clear
Vienna	01	10	clear
Zurich	06	11	rain

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DRIVE CAREFULLY

Bezeq names interim head

By JUDY SIEGEL

Bezeq's board of directors yesterday appointed Avi Hochman, the telecommunications company's deputy director-general for finance and logistics, as acting director-general. He will fill the shoes of Yitzhak Kaul, who left Bezeq on March 1 to head Clal, until a permanent replacement is found.

The board meeting, attended by Communications Minister Limor Livnat, discussed the decision by Dr. Yoram Turbowicz not to appeal a justice Ministry-appointed committee decision barring him from serving as director-general for a year.

Turbowicz, a highly acclaimed lawyer who recently headed the Anti-Trust Authority, had been approved by Bezeq's board several weeks ago, but the committee insisted on a cooling-off period.

According to the Communications Ministry, which was shocked by Turbowicz's decision, there are "a number of serious candidates" for director-general, but names or a time frame for an appointment were not published.

"We are rather in the same situation as when Kaul announced his resignation in November," said one Bezeq source.

Hochman, 41, has a master's degree in business administration from the Hebrew University. He joined the Communications Ministry in 1981 and moved to the Postal Authority in 1987, where he worked as director of the finance division and headed the Postal Bank service. He also served as deputy director-general of the Giltec company.

Bezeq stock dropped 2.5% yesterday, from NIS 8.51 to NIS 8.30.

Doctors warn about early hospital discharges

By JUDY SIEGEL

Patients who were prematurely discharged from hospitals due to overcrowding are returning ill to the wards at unprecedented rates, the Israel Medical Association charged yesterday.

The IMA announced the launching of a "public struggle," aimed at adding 7,000 beds to the public hospitals.

The IMA will hold worker assemblies in all the hospitals on Sunday. At these meetings, doctors will be told to discharge patients only when their condition clearly allows them to be sent home.

IMA chairman Dr. Yoram Blachar said that 1,700 of the beds were needed immediately to relieve the severe crowding in internal medicine and many other hospital departments.

According to IMA statistics, the length of the average hospital stay has been cut in half in the past two decades, and there are internal medicine departments where patients are discharged after an average of only three days, despite having serious illnesses. As a result, many patients return ill to the hospital.

The average occupancy rate in the country's internal medicine departments is 130% to 150%.

Health Ministry spokesman Effi Lahav said the ministry is conducting "marathon discussions" with the Treasury over the issue.

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GLASS

The Eretz Israel Museum, Tel Aviv

Renovated Glass Pavilion Reopens

The Glass Pavilion, heart of the Eretz Israel Museum, has reopened after two years of modernization and refurbishing. The Glass Pavilion's exhibition of rare and beautiful ancient glass artifacts dynamically details the technology of glass from its inception in this region more than 3,500 years ago.

In celebration of the opening the work of famous Venetian glass artist Egidio Costantini will be exhibited. The exhibition "From the Angels Workshop 1950-1996" displays some of the joint creations of Costantini and some of the world's leading artists of our times: Picasso, Ap, Ernst and many others, including Israel's own Reuven Rubin. The exhibition is being held under the patronage of the Italian Cultural Institute, Tel-Aviv.

Eretz Israel Museum, Tel Aviv
2 Haim Levannon St., Tel. 03 - 6415244/8
Open Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays
9:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Wednesdays 9:00 AM - 8:00 PM
Saturdays 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

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